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International Court of Justice

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Ri-Exhibit No. 193

404

COPY

from the White-Paper Nr.2: Documents on the Events preceding the Outbreak of War.

No. 449

Memorandum of the State Secretary at the Foreign Office

(Translation)

Berlin, August 15, 1939

Today the French Ambassador called on me after his return from leave. The Ambassador calmly and firmly expressed approximately the following views on the present situation: France had taken up her position. Her relations to Poland and Britain were known. A conflict between Germany and Poland would automatically involve France. That was a fact and not the wish of France. On the contrary, there was nothing France desired more urgently than a German-Polish compromise, especially with regard to Danzig. He hoped that a settlement of this special question would also bring about a general German-Polish détente. This, in short, was the impression he had received during his last conversation with M. DALADIER and M. BONNET. His latest impression in Berlin, however, was that of a certain aggravation in the situation. He was especially disturbed by the fact that the latest German utterances repeatedly mentioned the question of honor; that obviously meant a serious aggravation of the situation.

I thereupon confirmed M. COULONDRE's impression that the situation had changed since his going on leave in July. I then went back rather far and expounded the necessary arguments to characterize the unbridled suicidal policy of Poland. I spoke to M. COULONDRE of Poland's note to Danzig of the Saturday before last, which amounted to an ultimatum, of the aggressive tone in the exchange of opinions between Berlin and Warsaw last week, of the provocative utterances of the inspired Polish press, of the continous measures for suppressing, impeding, banishing Germans etc., adopted by Polish subordinate authorities. (In this connection I showed M.COULONDRE a list which had just arrived.) I interpreted all this as being the practical result of the promises given by France and Britain to Poland. This

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H0789 - 0003

was the harvest sown by the Western Powers in Poland.

M. COULONDRE then made a little excursion into the past and represented the British-French guarantee to Poland as the inevitable result of Germany's having established a protectorate in Czechia. Apart from this the Ambassador asserted that, according to French reports, there was no lack of restraint in Warsaw, but that on the contrary the Polish Government remained quite calm.

As instructed, I then spoke in a very grave and warning tone and disputed M. COULONDRE's statements most emphatically. The Polish Government, I pointed out, did not really govern the country. Paris apparently did not know what "Polish mismanagement" meant. The Polish Government must be out of their wits, otherwise threats, amounting to an ultimatum as lately applied to Danzig, could not have been pronounced by Polish diplomats. Such excesses only proved Poland's implicit confidence in her two big brothers in the West, who would surely help her. We could and would no longer stand the continuation of such an attitude on the part of Poland. Poland was running amok, and thus bringing her fate upon herself. Poland's folly, like every other folly, I contiued, had certain merits: (1.) Poland's friend's could see what they themselves had brought about, and (2.) by such conduct Poland released her friends from their obligation to support her, for one could not imagine that either France or Britain would risk her very existence in favor of her friend who had gone mad. I therefore did not understand why, at the beginning of our conversation, M. COULONDRE could have described French assistance for Poland as natural and automatic.

M. COULONDRE then mentioned that the France-Polish Treaty of Alliance had been strengthened still more by the guarantee given this year; France's legal obligation to Poland, however, was not the determining factor. For her security France needed balance of power in Europe. If this were disturbed in favor of Germany, i.e. if Poland were overrun by Germany now, it would be France's turn next; or else France's power would have to decline to the level of Belgium or the Netherlands. France would then be practically Germay's vassal and this is exactly what she did not wish to be.

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I urgently requested the Ambassador to inform himself of Poland's real attitude and to rid himself of his completely erroneous idea regarding the behavior of his ally. He would surely draw the correct conclusions.

When M. COULONDRE asked me what these conclusions were, I told him that Poland would have to comply with Germany's justified claims and that she would have to alter her general attitude towards Germany completely.

Finally the Ambassador said that his Government would not consent to bringing any pressure to bear on Warsaw as they had done on Prague last year. The situation had changed sind then.

I replied drily to M. COULONDRE that it was not for me to offer advice to him or his Government. They should consider the facts and allow them to speak for themselves.

In the end the Ambassador assured me of his readiness to co-operate in any way toward the maintenance of peace. A European war would end in a defeat of all parties, even of the Russia of today. The victor would not be Stalin but Trotzky.

WEIZSAECKER

A certified true copy
Dr. Martin HORN
Attorney at Law.

H0789-0005

COPY

406

from the White-Paper No. 2: Documents on the Events preceding the Outbreak of War.

No. 450

Memorandum of the State Secretary at the Foreign Office.

(Translation)

Berlin, August 15, 1939

After a long interval the British Ambassador today came to see me to discuss the situation. He asked me without much preamble about the result of Count Ciano's visit to Salzburg.

In my reply I did not refer to Count Ciano and my conversation with him, but I described the deterioration in the situation between Berlin and Warsaw and approximately followed the line of thought which I had taken up this morning, as instructed, in my conversation with the French Ambassador. Perhaps I chose even stonger terms in regard to Polish policy when speaking to Sir Nevile Henderson than in my conversation with M. Coulondre.

When we were discussing the question of the customs inspectors, Sir Nevile HENDERSON made an assertion about German smuggling of arms and an extensive militarization of Danzig. He said that Polish rights and interests were affected by this, without Poland's having remonstrated. I most emphatically contested his view that the military measures taken in Danzig were unjustified. Danzig was only protecting itself against its protector. This I hoped was still permitted. I further explained how British policy had granted a jester's license to the Polish Government, of which the Poles were now making full use. Britain would now have to realize where her policy of encirclement had led her, and would, I suppose, hardly be inclined or obliged to allow her Polish friends, who had completely lost their heads, to lead her to disaster.

The conversation with Sir Nevile HENDERSON this afternoon again revealed a fundamental difference of opinion regarding the Polish attitude. Sir Nevile HENDERSON, or I should say his Government, asserted that Poland was reasonable and calm, and he disputed the fact that she was in a position to commit an act of aggression against Germany. In all other cases of a Polish

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H0789-0006

-German conflict, however, the British Government were under an obligation to give her armed assistance and were firmly determined to do so. Poland, however, would not undertake any major step without previous consultation with Britain.

I then asked the Ambassador whether London could really have consented to the threatening note to Danzig, or to the Polish declaration handed to us in the middle of last week, or to all the provocative speeches and articles and to the continuous suppression of the German minority. The limit of our patience had been reached. The policy of a country like Poland consisted of a thousand provocations. I asked whether Britain believed herself able to restrain Poland from every new and unconsidered action? As long as Warsaw felt itself protected by London, Britain's belief in her ability to manage the Poles was a mere theory. The reverse was the case.

After that I had to deny the assertion that instructions to adopt a more rigorous attitude had reached Danzig through our Consul-General there. I termed this statement, which had been made to the Ambassador, a direct lie.

The Ambassador then touched upon the question as to whether the problem of Danzig could not be postponed until it could be solved in a more peaceful atomsphere. He believed that we should then have better prospects of success. Sir Nevile HENDERSON thought that I should not be able to answer this question I replied, however, that this question was purely theoretical, for a postponement could only by used by the Poles to aggravate the mischief which they had already caused; there was, therefore, no question of an improvement in the atmosphere.

The Ambassador then asked whether we could not take the initiative in arranging German-Polish negotiations. I thereupon reminded him that, M. BECK, in his last speech in the Sejm, had used the tones of a Pasha speaking from his divan when he declared that if Germany adapted herself to Polish principles he would be ready graciously to accept proposals framed accordingly, Besides, it was only last week that the Polish Government had declared that every German initiative at the expense of Polish demands was to be considered an act of aggression. I therefore saw no possibility for any German initiative.

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Ri-Exhibit No. 194

Cont'd
No.450

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The Ambassador then intimated that extensive German-British discussions on larger issues such as the colonies, raw materials, etc., might take place later on, but at the same time he said that the situation was much more difficult and critical than last year, for Mr. CHAMBERLAIN could not fly to Germany again.

As far as I was concerned, I said, I was unable to offer any advice except that Poland should see reason as soon as possible with regard to the acute problem of Danzig and her general attitude towards us.

Sir Nevile HENDERSON left me, conscious of the gravity and precariousness of the situation.

WEIZSAECKER.

A certified true copy:

Dr. Martin HORN

Attorney at Law.

H0789 – 0008

Extract from

" Failure of a Mission " by HENDERSON.

Pages 246 - 248.

Ri - 195.

1.

On the surface the situation had altered little during the month that was past, and the barometer still appeared to stand at "No change". But there were ominous signs of its falling. There was, on the one hand, still no contact between Berlin and Warsaw, and the Polish and German Ambassadors at Berlin and Warsaw were sitting like Achilles in their tents. Mutual recrimination over the persecution of minorities was growing in volume, and Danzig was seething with rumours and excitement. On the other hand, the successful conclusion of the negotiations between London - Paris and Moscow seemed as far away as ever. It was true that the British and French Military missions were now packing their trunks for their trip to Moscow, and when they actually got there on August 11th, it should have been but natural to conclude that this meant that STALIN, while still seeking to drive the hardest bargain which he could in Russian interests, had finally made up his mind to co-operate in some form or other with the Western Powers in resistance to further German aggression. But against that had to be set the disturbing development that Moscow was now unblushingly showing the cloven hoof, and was asking for a free hand in The Baltic States.

Russia's real objective was thus becoming apparent and, with Germany secretly in the market, the scales were being heavily weighted against the Western Powers. They could not barter away the honour and freedom of small but independent countries; while Germany could. It is to be hoped that some daylight will be thrown on the question as to whether STALIN from the beginning was in collusion with HITLER with a view to spinning out his negotiations with us until Germany was ready to strike;, or whether both Germany and ourselves were simply his catspaws. I incline to the latter view myself, but it is mere guesswork, and I am prejudiced. From the outset I regarded the Russian negotiations as something which had to be attempted, but which lacked all sense of realities. I never believed in any effective or altruistic assistance being afforded by the

H0789 - 0009

Extract from

" Failure of a Mission " by HENDERSON

Pages 246 - 248.

Ri - 195

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Russians to the Poles. The most that I hoped was that if the U.S.S.R., however half-heartedly, joined the peace front, HITLER would regard discretion as the better part of valour and come down on the side of peaceful discussion. But I always believed that Moscow's chief aim was to embroil Germany and the Western Powers in a common ruin and to emerge as the tertius gaudens of the conflict between them. This was, up to August, similarly the professed view of all Germans, from HITLER downwards, who commented on our Russian negotiations. I raised this point with HITLER himself when I saw him at Berchtesgaden on August 23rd. RIBBENTROP was at Moscow on that day, engaged in signing the Russo-German Treaty, and HITLER expatiated to me triumphantly on the value and great advantages of the new alliance, which he said was definite and permanent. I reminded him of his previous attitude towards the Soviets, expressed the opinion that he might find Russia's friendship even more dangerous than her enmity, and added, speaking quite personally and on purely moral grounds, that if an agreement had to be made with Moscow, for whom Communism was now merely the cloak for intense nationalism, and whose ulterior motives seemed to me highly suspicious, I had rather Germany made it than ourselves. HITLER was for a moment confused and taken aback. He retorted, however, that it was all our fault: it was we who had driven him into Russia's arms. But it was the answer of a man who was seeking to excuse himself.

H0789-0010

Extract from

" Failure of a Mission " by HENDERSON.

Pages 246 - 248.

Ri - 195

410

2.

The silence between Berlin and Warsaw and the lack of progress in our talks at Moscow were, however, not the only indications that the barometer might suddenly and rapidly fall. Apart from the deterioration of the situation at Danzig, the German army was rapidly nearing the completion of its pre-mobilisation preparations. Three or four days at most would now suffice to put it on a full war footing. The arrangements for the Tannenberg celebrations on August 27th were proceeding systematically and men and material were being steadily drafted eastwards via Koenigsberg into East Prussia. HITLER would shortly be able to choose his own moment for precipitating the crisis, and I was more than ever certain that the last week of August would prove to be zero hour. Colonel BECK was at this time inquiring what instructions the British and French Governments proposed to give to their ambassadors regarding the Nuremberg Rally in September. The Polish Ambassador, whose position in Berlin had become entirely equivocal, would conform, he said, with whatever was decided as regards his British and French colleagues. When I was asked by the Foreign Office what my views were on this point, my answer was that it was still quite uncertain whether the 1939 Nuremberg Party festival would ever take place at all, but that, if we did safely reach September, I would have no hesitation in gladly attending some at least of the celebrations there.

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Extract from

" Failure of a Mission " by HENDERSON.

(Pages 253 – 254.) 3.

HITLER's carefully calculated patience was, in fact, by now exhausted, and on August 18th I telegraphed to Lord HALIFAX that I had come to the definite conclusion that, if peace was to be preserved, the present situation could not be allowed to continue and that the only alternative to war must be some immediate and mediatory action. In this connection I repeated a suggestion which I had made some time previously - namely, that a personal letter should be addressed by the Prime Minister to HITLER and be delivered by some emissary from London. Two days later I again telegraphed to the same effect, and stated my conviction that HITLER had now finally decided upon some form of immediate action which would force the issue. I alluded to the increased German military strength which had been assembled in East Prussia under cover of the Tannenberg anniversary, and again expressed my apprehension lest that celebration might prove the starting-point for the action which HITLER contemplated. I have little doubt that such was HITLER's original and premeditated intention. A few days later definite information, in fact, reached me that the long-expected but carefully concealed German military concentrations were already in progress, and that instructions had been given to complete them by August 24th. One report specifically mentioned August 25th as the date fixed for the German advance into Poland. I believe that the orders to that effect were actually signed by HITLER.

The truth undoubtedly was that by this time not only were Germany's military preparations sufficiently advanced for HITLER to take the initiative, but also he could now definitely count upon Russia's connivance in his infamous designs against Poland. The exact date on which he was able to do the latter will be, for obvious reasons, one of the most interesting points which history will have to reveal to us - that and the price, moral and material, which HITLER paid for U.S.S.R. complicity. In any case, so far as the rest of the world was concerned, it was late in the evening of August 21st that the bombshell was exploded, announcing that negotiations had been

H0789 – 0012

Extract from

" Failure of a Mission " by HENDERSON

(Pages 253 - 254).

Ri - 195.

41. C1

concluded for the signature of a Russo-German non-aggression pact and that RIBBENTROP would fly to Moscow on August 23rd to sign it. The secret, which on the German side had been known to not more than a few persons, had been well kept.

H0789 - 0013

Extract from

" Failure of a Mission " by HENDERSON.

(Pages255.)

Ri - 195.

41)

4.

At the moment when Herr von RIBBENTROP was preparing to fly to Moscow, I received, shortly before 9 p.m. on August 22nd, instructions to convey without delay a personal letter from the Prime Minister to Herr HITLER. The State Secretary was away at some aerodrome seeing RIBBENTROP off to Moscow, but I managed to establish contact with Herr HEWEL, the liaison officer at headquarters between the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Chancellor. He was sympathetic and helpful, and later in the evening I got into touch with WEIZSACKER himself. In the course of that night, after several telephonic communications, an interview was arranged for me with HITLER for the following day at Berchtesgaden, and I left Berlin at 9.30 a.m. on August 23rd, accompanied by both WEIZSACKER and HEWEL, in an aeroplane provided for me by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

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Extract from Ri - 195.

" Failure of a Mission " by HENDERSON. 115

(Pages 256 - 257) 5.

The three main points of the Prime Minister's letter were: (1) insistence on the determination of His Majesty's Government to fulfil their obligations to Poland, (2) their readiness, if a peace atmosphere could be created, to discuss all the problems at issue between our two countries, and (3) their anxiety, during a period of truce, to see immediate direct discussion initiated between Germany and Poland in regard to the reciprocal treatment of minorities. HITLER's reply, which was no less uncompromising than I had anticipated, was to the effect that Great Britain's determination to support Poland could not modify his policy as expressed in the German verbal note to the Polish Government of August 9th, that he was prepared to accept even a long war rather than sacrifice German national interests and honour, and that, if Great Britain persisted in her own measures of mobilisation, he would at once order the mobilisation, of the whole of the German forces.

At my first interview with him on that day HITLER was in a mood of extreme excitability. His language as regards the Poles and British responsibility for the Polish attitude was violent, recriminatory, and exaggerated. He referred, for instance, to 100,000 German refugees from Poland - a figure which was at least five times greater than the reality. Again I cannot say whether he was persuaded, or persuaded himself, of the reality of these figures. At my second interview, when he handed me his reply, he had recovered his calm, but was not less obdurate. Everything was England's fault. She had encouraged the Czechs last year, and she was now giving a blank cheque to Poland. No longer, he told me, did he trust Mr. CHAMBERLAIN. He preferred war, he said, when he was fifty to when he was fifty-five or sixty, He had himself always sought, and believed in the possibility of friendship with England. He now realised, he said, that those who had argued the contrary had been right, and nothing short of a complete change in British policy towards Germany could ever convince him of any sincere British desire for good relations. My last remark to him was that I could only deduce from his languages that my mission to Germany had failed, and that I bitterly regretted it.

H0789 – 0015

Extract from

Ri - 195.

" Failure of a Mission " by HENDERSON.

414

(Pages 268 - 269).

6.

Later in the course of the day I received three further messages for communication to the German Government. The first was a personal one from the Prime Minister to the Chancellor notifying the latter of the representations made by His Majesty's Government to Warsaw in regard to the avoidance of frontier incidents, and begging the German Government to take similar precautions. (I transmitted this in the afternoon to its destination in a personal letter to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.) The second similarly notified the German Government of our counsels of restraint to Poland, and asked for reciprocation on Germany's part. The third pointed out that the demand that a Polish reppresentative with full powers must come to Berlin to receive the German proposals was unreasonable, and suggested that the German Government should follow the normal procedure of inviting the Polish Ambassador to call and of handing him the German proposals for transmission to Warsaw with a view to arrangements being made for the conduct of negotiations. This last communication also reminded the German Government that it had promised to communicate its detailed proposals to His Majesty's Government, who undertook, if they offered a reasonable basis, to do their best in Warsaw to faciliate negotiations.

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Extract from

" Failure of a Mission " by HENDERSON.

Ri - 195.

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(Page 259)

-7-

My interview with HITLER, at which Herr von RIBBENTROP and Dr. SCHMIDT were also present, lasted on this occasion over an hour. The Chancellor spoke with calm and apparent sincerity. He described his proposals as a last effort, for conscience' sake, to secure good relations with Great Britain, and he suggested that I should fly to London myself with them. I told his Excellency that, while I was fully prepared to consider this course, I felt it my duty to tell him quite clearly that my country could not possibly go back on its word to Poland, and that, however anxious we were for a better understanding with Germany, we could never reach one except on the basis of a negotiated settlement with Poland.

(Pages 259-260)

-8-

Whatever may have been the underlying motive of this final gesture on the part of the Chancellor, it was one which could not be ignored, and, with Lord HALIFAX's consent, I flew to London early the following morning (August 26th), in a German plane which was courteously put at my disposal. Two days were spent by His Majesty's Government in giving the fullest and most careful consideration to Hitler's message.

(Page 262)

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I left London at 5 p.m. on August 28th, and at 10.30 p.m. that evening I was received by Herr HITLER at the Reichschancery, and handed to him the British reply, together with a German translation. HITLER was once again friendly and reasonable, and appeared to be not dissatisfied with the answer which I had brought to him. He observed, however, that he must study it carefully and would give me a written reply the next day. Our conversation lasted for well over an hour, and it was nearly midnight before I got back to the Embassy.

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Ri - Exhibit No. 196

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COPY

from the White-Paper No. 2: Documents on the Events preceding the Outbreak of War.

No. 451

Memorandum of the State Secretary at the Foreign Office

(Translation)

Berlin, August 18, 1939

The British Ambassador called on me today to tell me that he would probably fly to Salzburg next Tuesday. Wednesday was the big day in the motor cycle races, in which a number of Englishmen were participating.

Touching upon the political situation, Sir Nevile HENDERSON once more remarked that he was convinced that Poland would not let herself be carried away to commit provocative acts. The British Government would see to this.

Once more I had to note Sir Nevile HENDERSON's complete misconception of the Polish attitude towards the Germans, and I explained the real facts of the case to him. Respecting this we established a fundamental difference between British and German information and opinions. HENDERSON once more repeated most emphatically that Germany should not make the mistake of believing that Britain would not give armed assistance to the Poles. After all, he knew the present situation in Britain.

WEIZSAECKER.

A certified true copy

Dr.Martin HORN

Attorney at Law

H0789 - 0018

Ri-Exhibit No.197

419

COPY

from the White-Paper No.2: Documents on the Events preceding the Outbreak of War.

No. 452

The German Chargé d'Affaires in Washington to the Foreign Office

Report

(Translation)

Washington, D.C., August 21, 1939

As I hear from a reliable source, Mr.BEVIN, Secretary General of the Transport and General Workers Union of Great Britain, who is at the moment in New York as a delegate to the Congress for Democratic Education, expressed the opinion to an American friend that war was inevitable unless Germany gave in. The reason Mr. BEVIN gave for this was that he and his trade-union colleagues knew the leading personalities in the British Government. They themselves had experienced in their struggles that these people hold their opinion once they had made up their minds. This was definitely the case today, and the Labor Party had co-operated in bringing about this resolute attitude.

THOMSEN

A certified true copy

Dr. Martin HORN

Attorney at Law

H0789-0019

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COPY

from the White-Paper No.2: Documents on the Events preceding the Outbreak of War.

No. 453

The German Chargé d'Affaires in London to the Foreign Office

Telegram

(Translation)

London, August 22, 1939

Text of the official communiqué concerning today's Cabinet meeting:

"The cabinet at their meeting today considered the international situation in all its bearings, in addition to reports that have been received as to military movements in Germany. The cabinet also took note of the report that a non-aggression pact between the German and Soviet Governments was about to be concluded.

"They had no hesitation in deciding that such an event would in no way affect their obligation to Poland, which they have repeatedly stated in public and which they are determined to fulfill.

"Parliament has been summoned to meet on Thursday next, when the Government propose to invite both Houses to pass through all its stages, the emergency powers (defense) bill. The effect of this will be to place the Government in a position to take any necessary measures without delay should the situation require it. In the meantime, further measures of a precautionary character are being taken by the department; for instance, the calling up of certain personnel for the navy, army and for civil defense. Arrangements are also being made to deal with certain matters affecting the export from this country of essential materials and commodities.

"While taking these measures of precaution, which the Government consider necessary at this time, they remain of the opinion that there is nothing in the difficulties that have arisen between Germany and Poland which would justify the use of force, involving a European war with all its tragic consequences, as the Prime Minister has repeatedly said.

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"There are indeed no questions in Europe which should not be capable of peaceful solution, if only conditions of confidence could be restored.

"H.M.Government are, as they always have been, ready to assist in creating such conditions, but if in spite of all their efforts others insist on the use of force, they are prepared and determined to resist it to the uttermost."

KORDT.

A certisfied true copy:

Dr. Martin HORN

Attorney at Law.

H0789-0021

"Exhibit Ri. No. 199"

424

COPY

from the White-Paper No. 2: Documents on the Events preceding the Outbreak of War..

No. 455

Conversation of the Fuehrer with the British Ambassador, Berchtesgaden, August 23, 1939

Memorandum of Herr von Loesch, Interpreter

The British Ambassador began by saying that he was bringing a letter on behalf of the British Government. Originally a more prominent person was to have done so, but the course of events had called for prompt action, especially as the British Government had been much surprised by the news of the German-Soviet pact.

The Fuehrer stated that he had already seen a translation of the letter. He was in the act of composing a written reply, but in the meantime he would give the Ambassador a few verbal explanations to the same effect. Sir Nevile HENDERSON replied that he hoped a solution of the critical situation could be found; Britain had full appreciation for the fact that German-British co-operation was necessary for the welfare of Europe.

The Fuehrer replied that this should have been realized sooner. When the Ambassador raised the objection that the British Government had given guarantees and had to abide by them, the Fuehrer answered that he had made it clear in his reply that Germany was not responsible for the guarantees given by Britain, but that Britain was responsible for the consequences arising from these obligations. It was Britain's business to be clear on this point. He had informed the Polish Government that every further persecution of the Germans in Poland would result in immediate action on the part of the Reich. On the other hand, as he had heard, Mr. CHAMBERLAIN had provided for increased military preparations in Britain. German preparations had been limited to purely defensive measures. "Should I," said the Fuehrer, "hear of further measures of this kind being put into effect on the part of Britain, today or tomorrow, I shall order immediate general mobilization in Germany!"

When the Ambassador remarked that war would then be unavoidable, the Fuehrer repeated his statement about mobilization.

He pointed out that people in Britain were always talking about the "poisoned atmosphere." The fact was that the "atmosphere" had been "poisoned" by Britain. Had it not been for Britain he would have come to a peaceful understanding with Czechoslovakia last year, and the same would have certainly been achieved this year with Poland in the Danzig question. Britain alone was responsible - of this the whole of Germany was firmly convinced. Today in Poland hundreds of thousands of minority Germans were ill-treated, dragged away to concentration camps and driven from their homes. He had extensive documentary evidence on the subject, which, so far, he had refrained from publishing. Britain had given a blank cheque for all this, and now she would have to pay up. Now that Britain had given a guarantee, he, the Fuehrer, had seen himself compelled to take up a firm attitude on this question. He could not permit tens of thousands of fellow Germans to be slaughtered just because of a British whim.

He recalled the fact that formerly Germany had lived on good terms with Poland, and that he had made a decent and fair offer to Poland. This offer had been sabotaged by the Western Powers and, as in the case of Czechoslovakia this had to a large extent been due to the reports of military attaches, who had spread false rumors of a German mobilization.

H0789 - 0022

 423+424

Here the Ambassador argued that the Polish Government had refused the German offer before Britain had given guarantees.

The Fuehrer continued by saying that Mr. CHAMBERLAIN could not have devised a better plan to unite all Germany than that of standing up for Poland and for a pro-Polish settlement of the Danzig question. He saw no possibilities in negotiations, because he was convinced that the British Government were not at all interested in a settlement. He could only repeat once more that a general mobilization would be proclaimed in Germany if further military measures were adopted by Britain. The same held good for France.

After the Fuehrer had emphasized the fact that all this would be set down in writing, he stated that he had done all that a man could do. Britain had made an enemy of the man who had wanted to become her greatest friend. Now Britain would come to know a Germany other than the one she had been accustomed to for so many years.

The Ambassador replied that it was known in Britain that Germany was strong, a fact which she had often proved lately.

The Fuehrer stated that he had made a generous offer to Poland, but Britain had interfered.

The Fuehrer then explained how, on this same spot some months ago, he had talked over the same settlement with Colonel BECK, who then described the settlement as too sudden, but who, nevertheless, saw its possibilities. In March he had repeated his proposals. At that time, the Fuehrer emphasized, Poland would certainly have agreed if Britain had not interfered. The British press had then stated that the liberty of both Poland and Roumania was being threatened.

The Fuehrer then explained that at the least attempt on the part of Poland to take further action against Germany or against Danzig, he would immediately intervene, and furthermore, that a mobilization in the West would be answered by a German mobilization.

The Ambassador: "Is this a threat?" - The Fuehrer: "No, a protective measure!" -

He then stated that the British Government had preferred anything to co-operation with Germany. On the contrary, their determination to destroy had led them to turn to France, to Turkey and to Moscow.

Against this the Ambassador protested, stating that Brtain did not want to destroy Germany.

The Fuehrer replied that that was nevertheless his firm conviction, and so he had built the Siegfried Line at a cost of 9 billion Reichsmarks in order to protect Germany from an attack from the West.

Sir Nevile HENDERSON drew attention to the fact that the change in the British attitude dated from March 15, to which the Fuehrer replied that Poland had become excited on her own account over the Carpatho-Ukraine. Moreover the internal state of affairs in Czechoslovakia had become unbearable for Germany. Bohemia and Moravia, after all, owed their culture and civilization to Germans and not to Englishmen. He was convinced that the best possible solution had been reached in Czechia. President HACHA had been happy to find a way out of the crisis; it did not, of course, matter to Britain whether or not there was shooting in the heart of Europe.

Finally the Fuehrer assured the Ambassador that he had no wish to reproach him and that he had always appreciated what the British Ambassador had done for German-British friendship. personally

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The Ambassador spoke of the tragic development which would now ensue, whereupon the Fuehrer, basing his remarks on Britain's avowed intentions on this point, said that if war came it would be a life and death struggle: and Britain would have more to lose.

Sir Nevile HENDERSON remarked that according to CLAUSEWITZ war always brought surprises; all he knew was that everybody would do his duty.

The Fuehrer said that Germany had never undertaken anything that could harm Britain; in spite of that Britain was taking sides against Germany. He once more referred to the question of Danzig and Poland, in which the British point of view was "rather to have war than anything to Germany's advantage."

Sir Nevile HENDERSON stated that he had done his best. Lately he had written to a German Minister that the Fuehrer, whom it had taken ten years to win Germany, would also have to give Britain more time.

The Fuehrer stated that the fact that Britain was against Germany in the Danzig question had profoundly shocked the German nation.

The Ambassador argued that it was merely the principle of force which they had opposed. In reply to which the Fuehrer asked whether Britain had ever found a solution for any of the idiocies of Versailles by way of negotiations.

The Ambassador had nothing to reply to this, and the Fuehrer stated that according to a German proverb it takes two to make a friendship.

Sir Nevile Henderson then stressed the fact that he personally had never believed in a pact between Britain, France and Russia. His opinion was that Russia by the delay only wanted to get rid of Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, in order ultimately to profit by a war. He personally would rather see Germany conclude a treaty with Russia than have Britain do so.

The Fuehrer answered: "Make no mistake. It will be a treaty lasting for many years."

The conversation ended with the Fuehrer's statement that the Ambassador would receive a written reply in the afternoon.

von LOESCH.

A true certified copy.

Dr. Martin HORN
Attorney at Law.

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"Exhibit Ri. No. 200" 426

Copy from the White Book of the Foreign Office 1939 Number 2

Documents concerning the Events preceding the Outbreak of the war.

Number 454

The British Prime Minister CHAMBERLAIN to the Fuehrer, 22 August 1939.

10 Downing Street, Whitehall, August 22,193

Your Excellency:

Your Excellency will have already heard of certain measures taken by His Majesty's Government, and announced in the press and on the wireless this evening.

These steps have, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, been rendered necessary by the military movements which have been reported from Germany, and by the fact that apparently the announcement of a German-Soviet Agreement is taken in some quarters in Berlin to indicate that intervention by Great Britain on behalf of Poland is no longer a contingency that need be reckoned with. No greater mistake could be made. Whatever may prove to be the nature of the German-Soviet Agreement, it cannot alter Great Britain's obligation to Poland which His Majesty's Government have stated in public repeatedly and plainly, and which they are determined to fulfil.

It has been alleged that, if His Majesty's Government had made their position more clear in 1914, the great catastrophe would have been avoided. Whether or not there is any force in that allegation, His Majesty's Government are resolved that on this occasion there shall be no such tragic misunderstanding.

If the case should arise, they are resolved, and prepared, to employ without delay all the forces at their command, and it is impossible to foresee the end of hostilities once engaged. It would be a dangerous illusion to think that, if war once starts, it will come to an early end even if a success on any one of the several fronts on which it will be engaged should have been secured.

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Having thus made our position perfectly clear, I wish to repeat to you my conviction that war between our two peoples would be the greatest calamity that could occur. I am certain that it is desired neither by our people, nor by yours, and I cannot see that there is anything in the questions arising between Germany and Poland which could not and should not be resolved without the use of force, if only a situation of confidence could be restored to enable discussions to be carried on in an atmosphere different from that which prevails today.

We have been, and at all times will be, ready to assist in creating conditions in which such negotiations could take place, and in which it might be possible concurrently to discuss the wider problems affecting the future of international relations, including matters of interest to us and to you.

The difficulties in the way of any peaceful discussion in the present state of tension are, however, obvious, and the longer that tension is maintained, the harder will it be for reason to prevail.

These difficulties, however, might be mitigated, if not removed, provided that there could for an initial period be a truce on both sides - and indeed on all sides - to press polemics and to all incitement.

If such a truce could be arranged, then, at the end of that period, during which steps could be taken to examine and deal with complaints made by either side as to the treatment of minorities, it is reasonable to hope that suitable conditions might have been established for direct negotiations between Germany and Poland upon the issues between them (with the aid of a neutral intermediary if both sides should think that that would be helpful).

But I am bound to say that there would be slender hope of bringing such negotiations to successful issue unless it were understood beforehand that any settlement reached would, when concluded, be guaranteed by other Powers. His Majesty's Government would be ready, if desired, to take such contribution as they could to the effective operation of such guarantees.

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At this moment I confess I can see no other way to avoid a catastrophe that will involve Europe in war.

In view of the grave consequences to humanity which may follow from the action of their rulers, I trust that Your Excellency will weigh with the utmost deliberation the considerations which I have put before you.

Yours sincerely,

NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN

A true certified copy.

Dr. Martin HORN,
Attorney at Law.

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"Exhibit Ri. No. 201" 428

Copy from the White Book of the Foreign Office 1939 Number 2

Document concerning Events preceding the Outbreak of the War.

Number 45

The Fuehrer to the British Prime Minister CHAMBERLAIN, 23 August 1939

Dated 23 August 1939

Your Excellency:

The Ambassador of His Britannic Majesty has just handed me a note in which Your Excellency, in the name of the British Government, has drawn attention to a number of points, which, in your opinion, are of extreme importance.

I beg to reply to your note as follows:

1. Germany has never sought to enter into conflict with Great Britain nor at any time interfered where British interests were concerned. On the contrary, Germany has for many years, although unfortunately without success, attempted to gain the friendship of Great Britain. For this reason, Germany voluntarily undertook a restriction of her own interests throughout a large area in Europe which would otherwise have been difficult to justify from a national political point of view.

2. The German Reich, however, has, like every other state, certain interests which it is impossible for it to renounce and which lie within the category that Germany's past history and her economic necessities have rendered of vital importance. Certain of these problems were, and are, of the utmost importance to any German Government both from a national political and from a psychological point of view.

One of these problems is that of the German city of Danzig and the problem of the Polish Corridor connected therewith. Only a few years ago this fact was recognized by numerous statesmen, by authorities in historical research and literary men, even in England. I should like to add that the civilization of all those areas which come within the sphere of German interests aforementioned, and especially those provinces which have returned to the Reich within the past 18 months, was developed not by Englishmen but exclusively by Germans, and, in part, during a period of history which covers more than the last thousand years.

3. Germany was prepared to settle the problem of Danzig and of the Polish Corridor by a very generous proposal, made once for all, and by means of negotiations. The assertions disseminated by Great Britain with regard to the mobilization of German troops against Poland, the assertion concerning aggressive intentions with regard to Roumania, Hungary, etc., as also the more recent so-called guarantees given to Poland, effectually destroyed any inclinations on the part of Poland to negotiate on a basis which would at the same time be acceptable to Germany.

4. The general assurance given by Great Britain to Poland that Great Britain would support Poland in case of conflict in any circumstance, irrespective of the causes giving rise to such conflict, could only be regarded here as an incitement to let loose, under cover of what might be termed a blank cheque, a wave of unspeakable terror against the one and a half million Germans domiciled in Poland. The atrocities which have taken place there since that time were terrible indeed for those on whom they were inflicted, but intolerable for the German Reich, which, as one of the Great Powers, was expected to watch them idly. In regard to the

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"Exhibit Ri. No. 201"
No. 456
(cont'd)

Free City of Danzig, Poland has, on countless occasions, infringed its rights, sent demands which were in the nature of an ultimatum and begun a process of economic strangulation.

5. The German Government informed the Polish Government a short time ago that they were not inclined to accept these developments in silence, that they would not tolerate the despatch of further notes couched in the form of an ultimatum to Danzig, that they would not tolerate a continuance of acts of violence inflicted on the German section of the population, nor would they tolerate the ruin of the Free City of Danzig by means of economic pressure, that is to say, the destruction of the very existence of the population of Danzig by a form of customs blockade, nor would they tolerate the continuance of such acts of provocation against the Reich. Regardless of the above, a solution must and will be found for the problem of Danzig and of the Polish Corridor.

6. Your Excellency informs me in the name of the British Government that in the event of any act of interference on the part of Germany, you will be compelled to support Poland. I have taken due note of your statement and can assure you that it can in no way shake the determination of the German Government to protect the interests of the Reich as set forth in paragraph 5. I likewise agree with your assurance that the ensuing war would, in this case, be a long one. If Germany is attacked by Britain, she is prepared and determined to fight. I have often declared to the German people and to the whole world that there can be no doubt as to the determination of the new German Reich to accept privation and misfortune in any form and at any time rather than sacrifice her national interests or even her honor.

7. The German Government have received information of the fact that the British Government intend to carry out mobilization measures, which in their nature are solely directed against Germany, as is stated in Your Excellency's note addressed to me. This is stated also to apply to France. As Germany never intended to adopt military measures other than those of a purely defensive nature against either Great Britain or France and, as has already been emphasized, never has intended nor intends in the future to attack either Great Britain or France, the announcement which Your Excellency confirmed in your note can only constitute an intended threat against the Reich. I must, therefore, inform Your Excellency that in theevent of such military measures being taken, I shall order the immediate mobilization of the German armed forces.

8. The question of a settlement of European problems in a peaceful spirit cannot be decided by Germany but chiefly by those who, since the crime of the Treaty of Versailles was committed, have steadily and obstinately opposed any peaceful revision of its terms. Only a change of attitude on the part of the Powers responsible for the Treaty can bring about a change for the better in the existing relations between Britain and Germany. During my whole life-time I have struggled to achieve a friendship between Britain and Germany, but the attitude adopted by British diplomacy, up to the present at least, has served to convince me of the hopelessness of such an attempt. If the future were to bring a schange in this respect, none would welcome it more than I.

Adolf HITLER

A true certified copy.

Dr. Martin HORN
Attorney at Law.

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"Exhibit Ri. No. 202"

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Copy from the White Paper of the Foreign Office 1939 Number 2

Documents concerning Events preceding the Outbreak of the war.

Number 457

Declaration of the Fuehrer to the British Ambassador 25 August 1939, 1,30 PM.

The Fuehrer declared at the outset that the British Ambassador at the close of their last conversation has expressed the hope that it would still prove possible to arrive at an understanding between Germany and England. He, the Fuehrer, had thereupon considered the situation once more and intended today to take a step in regard to England which was to be as decisive as the step taken in reagrd to Russia, the result of which had been the recent pact.

Yesterday's meeting of the House of Commons and the speeches made by Mr. CHAMBERLAIN and Lord HALIFAX were further reasons why the Fuehrer had again invited the British Ambassador to meet him.

The assertion that Germany wanted to conquer the world was ridiculous. The British Empire covered a territory of 40,000,000 square kilometres, Russia of 19,000,000 square kilometres, America of 9,500,000 square kilometres and Germany of less than [redacted] square kilometres. It was thus quite clear who wanted to conquer the world.

The Fuehrer informed the British Ambassador of the following:

1. The acts of provocation committed by Poland had become intolerable, irrespective of who might be responsible for them. If the Polish Government contested their responsibility, this merely proved that they themselves had no longer any influence on their military subordinates. In the preceding night 21 new frontier incidents had occurred. On the German side the utmost discipline had been displayed. All the incidents were due to Polish provocation. Besides this, non-military aircraft had been fired on. If the Polish Government declared themselves not responsible, this merely proved that they were unable to keep control over their own people.

2. Germany was resolved under all circumstances to put an end to these Macedonian conditions on her eastern frontier, not only in the interests of law and order but also for the sake of European peace.

3. The problem of Danzig and the Corridor would have to be solved. The British Prime Minister had made a speech which had done nothing towards bringing about a change in the German attitude. This speech might, if anything, give rise to a desperate and incalculable war between Germany and England, a war which would cause far greater bloodshed than that of 1914. In contrast to the last world war, Germany would not have to carry on a war on two fronts. The agreement concluded with Russia was unconditional and respresented a turning point in the foreign policy of the Reich with the greatest long-range possibilities. Under no circumstances would Russia and Germany again take up arms against one another. Apart from this fact the agreements made with Russia would safeguard Germany, in economic respects also, for a war of the longest duration.

The Fuehrer had always been strongly in favor of Anglo-German understanding. A war between England and Germany could, under the most favorable circumstances, bring Germany an advantage, but certainly could not bring the slightest gain to England.

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The Fuehrer declared that the German-Polish problem had to be and would be settled. He was, however, ready and resolved to approach England again, after this settlement, with a generous and comprehensive offer. He himself was a man of great decisions, and he would in this case also be capable of a great action. He approved of the British Empire and was prepared to pledge himself personally to its existence and to devote the might of the German Reich to that end, provided

(1.) that his colonial demands, which were limited and could be settled by peaceful negotiations, were fulfilled, for which he was prepared to concede a most protracted time-limit;

(2.) that his obligations to Italy remained untouched; in other words the Fuehrer did not expect England to give up her French obligations and could for his part not abandon his Italian obligations;

(3.) he wished also to emphasize Germany's unalterable resolution never again to enter into a conflict with Russia.

The Fuehrer would then be prepared to enter into agreements with Great Britain which, as he had already emphasized, would not only provide a German guarantee of the existence of the British Empire under all circumstances, but would, if necessary, assure German assistance for the British Empire, irrespective of where such assistance might be required. The Fuehrer would then also be ready to accept a reasonable limitation of armaments, in accordance with the new political and economic requirements. Finally the Fuehrer renewed his assurance that he was not interested in western problems and that he did not for one moment consider any frontier correction in the west. The western line of fortifications, which had cost billions, was the final frontier of the Reich in the west.

If the British Government would consider these suggestions, they might end in a blessing not only for Germany but also for the British Empire. If the British Government rejected the suggestions, war would be inevitable. Under no circumstances, however, would such a war add to the strength of Great Britain. The last war had amply proved this.

The Fuehrer repeated that he was a man of great decisions to which he felt himself bound, and that this was his final proposal. Immediately after the settlement of the German-Polish question he would approach the British Government with an offer.

A true certified copy.

Dr. Martin HORN
Attorney at Law.

Document 72/69

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Translation of Document No. 69 from "Documents concerning German-Polish Relations and the Outbreak of Hostilities between Great Britain and Germany of September 3, 1939.

Telegram from Sir N. HENDERSON to VISCOUNT HALIFAX.

(Received 1900 hours) Berlin 25 August 1939

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7. Among various points mentioned by Herr HITLER were: that the only winner of another European war would be Japan; that he was by nature an artist not a politician, and that once the Polish question was settled he would end his life as an artist and not as a warmonger; he did not want to turn Germany into nothing but a military barracks and he would only do so if forced to do so; that once the Polish question was settled he himself would settle down; that he had no interest in making Britain break her word to Poland; that he had no wish to be small-minded in any settlement with Poland and that all he required for an agreement with her was a gesture from Britain to indicate that she would not be unreasonable.

8. After I had left, Herr von Ribbentrop sent Dr. Schmidt to the Embassy with text of verbal statement and also a message from him to the effect that Herr Hitler had always and still wished for an agreement with Britain and begging me to urge His Majesty's Government to take the offer very seriously.

A certified true copy

s/ Dr. M. HORN

t/ Dr. MARTIN HORN

Attorney at Law

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"Exhibit Ri. No. 203"

464+465

Copy

from the White Paper Number 2

Documents concerning Events preceding the Outbreak of the War.

No. 459 British - Polish Treaty concerning mutual assistance, 25 August 1939

The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Polish Government:

Desiring to place on a permanent basis the collaboration between their respective countries resulting from the assurances of mutual assistance of a defensive character which they have already exchanged;

Have resolved to conclude an Agreement for that purpose and have appointed as their Plenipotentiaries:

The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland:

The Rt. Hon. Viscount HALIFAX, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs;

The Polish Government:

His Excellency Count Edward Raczynski, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Polish Republic in London;

who, having exchanged their Full Powers, found in good and due form, have agreed on the following provisions: -

Article 1

Should one of the Contracting Parties become engaged in hostilities with a European Power in consequence of aggression by the latter against that Contracting Party, the other Contracting Party will at once give the Contracting Party engaged in hostilities all the support and assistance in its power.

Article 2

(1) The provisions of Article 1 will also apply in the event of any action by a European Power which clearly threatened, directly or indirectly, the independence of one of the Contracting Parties, and was of such a nature that the Party in question considered it vital to resist it with its armed forces.

(2) Should one of the Contracting Parties become engaged in hostilities with a European Power in consequence of action by that Power which threatened the independence or neutrality of another European State in such a way as to constitute a clear menace to the security of that Contracting Party, the provisions of Article 1 will apply, without prejudice, however, to the rights of the other European State concerned.

Article 3

Should a European Power attempt to undermine the independence of one of the Contracting Parties by processes of economic penetration or in any other way, the Contracting Parties will support each other in resistance to such attempts. Should the European Power concerned thereupon embark on hostilities against one of the Contracting Parties, the provisions of Article 1 will apply.

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Article 4

The methods of applying the undertakings of mutual assistance provided for by the present Agreement are established between the competent naval, military and air authorities of the Contracting Parties.

Article 5

Without prejudice to the foregoing undertakings of the Contracting Parties to give each other mutual support and assistance immediately on the outbreak of hostilities, they will exchange complete and speedy information concerning any development which might threaten their independenc and, in particular, concerning any development which threatened to call the said undertakings into operation.

Article 6

(1) The Contracting Parties will communicate to each other the terms of any undertakings of assistance against aggression which they have already given or may in future give to other States.

(2) Should either of the Contracting Parties intend to give such an undertaking after the coming into force of the present Agreement, the other Contracting Party shall, in order to ensure the proper functioning of the Agreement, be informed thereof.

(3) Any new undertaking which the Contracting Parties may enter into in future shall neither limit their obligations under the present Agreement nor indirectly create new obligations between the Contracting Party not participating in these undertakings and the third State concerned.

Article 7

Should the Contracting Parties be engaged in hostilities in consequence of the application of the present Agreement, they will not conclude an armistice or treaty of peace except by mutual agreement.

Article 8

(1) The present Agreement shall remain in force for a period of five years.

(2) Unless denounced six months before the expiry of this period it shall continue in force, each Contracting Party having thereafter the right to denounce it at any time by giving six month's notice to that effect.

(3) The present Agreement shall come into force on signature.

In faith whereof the above-named Plenipotentiaries have signed the present Agreement and have affixed thereto their seals.

Done in English in duplicate, at London, the 25th August, 1939. A Polish text shall subsequently be agreed upon between the Contracting Parties and both texts will then be authentic.

(L.S.) HALIFAX (L.S.) Edward RACZYNSKI

A true certified copy.

Dr. Martin HORN
Attorney at Law.

H0789-0034

"Exhibit Ri. No. 204"

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COPY

from the White-Paper No. 2: Documents on the Events preceding the Outbreak of War.

No. 458.

Memorandum of the Director of the Political Department of the Foreign Office

Berlin, August 25, 1939

According to instructions, I telephoned to the British Ambassador at 4:15 p.m. today, and drew his attention to the report published in the evening edition of today's Berliner Boersenzeitung and other evening papers concerning the massacre at Bielitz where eight persons were killed and a number of others were injured.

WOERMANN

A true certified copy.

Dr. Martin HORN

Attorney at Law.

H0789-0035

Ri-Exhibit No.205

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C O P Y

from the White-Paper No.2

Documents on the Events preceding the Outbreak of War

No.460

M. Daladier, French Premier, to the Fuehrer, August 26, 1939

(Translation)

Paris, August 26, 1939

Your Excellency:

The French Ambassador in Berlin has brought your personal message to my knowledge.

At an hour when you speak of the gravest responsibility which two Heads of Government can be asked to take, namely that of shedding the blood of two great peoples desiring only peace and work, I owe it to you personally and to our respective nations to state that the fate of peace still rests in your hands.

You cannot doubt my feelings towards Germany, or the friendly feelings of France for your nation. No Frenchman has done more than I have to ensure not only peace between our two peoples, but also sincere co-operation in your own interests as well as in those of Europe and of the world.

Unless you are prepared to credit the French nation with a lower ideal of honor than the one with which I credit the German people, you cannot doubt that France will faithfully fulfil her obligation towards other powers which, like Poland, are, I am convinced, desirous of living at peace with Germany.

Both convictions are fully compatible with one another

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To this day there is nothing which might prevent a peaceful solution of the international crisis in a spirit of honor and dignity for all nations as long as the same will f peace prevails on all sides.

Together with the good will of France I proclaim tha of all her allies, I personally guarantee the readiness alwa shown by Poland to have mutual recourse to methods of free c ciliation such as can be envisaged between the Governments o two sovereign nations. With a perfectly clear conscience I can give you an assurance that among the differences which have arisen between Germany and Poland with regard to the Da zig question, there is not a single one which could not be submitted to such a procedure with a view to finding a just peaceful solution.

Upon my honor I can also state that in the clear and sincere solidarity of France with Poland and her allies ther is nothing that might in any way impair the peaceful disposi of my country. This solidarity has never prevented us from porting this peaceful disposition in Poland, and it does not do so today.

At so critical a moment I sincerely believe that no noble-minded person could understand how a war of destructio could be waged without a final attempt at a peaceful settle- ment between Germany and Poland having been undertaken. Your desire for peace could exercise its influence with full dete mination towards this end without detracting anything from Germany's honor. As Head of the French Government desirous of attaining full harmony between the French and the German na- tions, yet bound on the other hand to Poland by ties of frie ship and my pledged word, I am prepared to make every effort

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that an honorable man can make to bring this endeavor to a successful end.

Like myself you were a soldier in the last war. You know as well as I do the feelings of disgust and universal condemnation which the destruction caused by war left in the conscience of all nations, irrespective of its issue. The idea which I cherish of your great part as leader of the German nation on the road to peace towards the fulfillment of its tasks in the common effort towards civilization, prompts me to ask you for an answer to this my proposal.

Should French and German blood once more have to flow just as it did twenty-five years ago, in an even longer and more murderous war, each nation will fight fully confident of its ultimate victory. Yet we can be sure that ruin and barbarity will be the most certain victors.

Daladier

a certified true copy
signed: Dr Martin HORN
Attorney at law.

Cont.a Ri-Exhibit No.205

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Ri-Exhibit 206

C O P Y

441

from the White-Paper No.2

Documents on the Events preceding the Outbreak of War

No.461

The Fuehrer to M. Daladier, French Premier, August 27, 1939

Berlin, August 27, 1939.

Your Excellency:

I appreciate the concern you have expressed. I have always been equally conscious of the grave responsibility pl ced upon those who must decide the fate of nations. As an ex-soldier, I know as well as you do the horrors of war. Thi spirit and knowledge have guided me in a sincere endeavor to remove all causes of conflict between between ou two nations. I once told the French people quite frankly th the return of the Saar territory would be the basis for the achievement of this aim. Once that territory was returned, immediately solemnly renounced any further claims which migh affect France. The German people approved of my attitude. As you were able to see for yourself when you were in Germany last, the German people, conscious of the way they themselve behaved, did not and still do not entertain any animosity or still less hatred against their former brave opponents. On the contrary, once peace was definitely established along ou western frontier, there came an increasing sympathy, at any rate on the part of the German nation, - a sympathy markedly demonstrated on many occasions. The construction of the gre western fortifications which have cost and will still cost

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many billion marks, is documentary evidence that Germany has accepted and fixed the final frontier of the Reich. In doing so, the German people renounced two provinces which once belonged to the old German Reich, were later on regained at the price of many lives, and were finally defended at the price of still more lives. Your Excellency will admit that this renunciation was not merely a gesture for tactical reasons but a decision confirmed by all our subsequent measures. You, Excellency, cannot cite a single instance in which this final settlement of the German frontier in the West has ever been disputed by one line or word. I believed that by this renunciation and by this attitude every possible cause of conflict between our two nations, which might have led to a repetition of the tragic years of 1914 to 1918, had been eliminated. The voluntary limitation of German claims in the West cannot, however, be regarded as an acceptance of the Dictate of Versailles in all other fields. Year by year I have tried earnestly to achieve the revision of at least the most impossible and most unbearable of all the conditions of this Dictate through negotiation. This proved impossible. Many enlightened men of all nations believed and were convinced that revision was bound to come. Whatever objection may be raised against my methods, whatever fault may be found with them, it cannot be overlooked or denied that I succeeded without any more bloodshed in finding solutions which were in many cases satisfactory not only for Germany. By the manner in which these solutions were accomplished, statesmen of other nations were relieved of their obligation, which they often found impossible to fulfill, of having to accept responsibility for this revision before their own people. One thing I feel sure Your Excellency will admit

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namely, that the revision was bound to come. The Dictate of Versailles was unbearable. No Frenchman with a sense of hon and certainly not you, M. Daladier, would, in a similar posi tion, have acted differently from the way I did. I therefore tried to remove this most insane stipulation of the Dictate of Versailles. I made an offer to the Polish Government whi actually shocked the German people. No one but I could have dared to come forward with such a proposal. Therefore I cou make it only once. I am firmly convinced that if Poland at t time had been advised to take a sensible course instead of b ing incited by a wild campaign of the British press against Germany, accompanied by rumors of German mobilization, then Europe would today be able to enjoy a state of profound peac for the next 25 years. Actually, it was the lie about Germa aggression that excited public opinion in Poland; the Polish Government were handicapped in making necessary and clear de cisions and, above all, their judgment on the extent of Pols 's possibilities was clouded by the subsequent promise of a guarantee. The Polish Government rejected the proposals. Fi ly convinced that Britain and France would now fight for Pol Polish public opinion began to raise demands which might best described as sheer lunacy were they not so extraordinarily d gerous. At that time unbearable terrorism set in; physical economic oppression of more than one and a half millions of mans living in the territories severed from the Reich. I do not intend to speak of the atrocities which have occurred. I in Danzig the outrages committed by the Polish authorities ly created the impression that the city was apparently hope ly delivered up to the arbitrary action of a power that is f reign to the national character of the city and its populat

Cont. a Ri-Exhibit No.206

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May I ask, M. Daladier, how you as a Frenchman would act if, by the unfortunate ending of a bravely-fought war, [illegible] of your provinces was separated by a corridor in the possession of an alien power, and a large city - let us say Marseilles - was prevented from bearing allegiance to France, while Frenchmen in this territory were being persecuted, beaten, maltreated and even murdered in a bestial manner. You are a Frenchman, M. Daladier, and I therefore know how you would act. I am a German, M. Daladier, and you will not doubt my sense of honor and my sense of duty which make me act in exactly the same way. If you had to face a calamity such as confronts us, would you, M. Daladier, understand how Germany, for no reason at all, could use her influence to ensure that such a corridor through France should remain? That the stolen territories should not be returned, and that Marseilles should be forbidden to join France? I certainly cannot imagine Germany fighting you for such a cause. I, for Germany, renounced our claim to Alsace-Lorraine in order to avoid further bloodshed. Still less would we shed blood in order to maintain such an injustice as I have pictured, which would be as intolerable for you as it would be meaningless for us. My feelings on everything expressed in your letter, M. Daladier, are the same as yours. Perhaps we, as ex-soldiers, should readily understand each other on many points. Yet I would ask you to appreciate also this; namely, that no nation with a sense of honor can ever give up almost two million people and see them maltreated on its own frontiers. I therefore formulated a clear demand: Danzig and the Corridor must return to Germany. The Macedonian conditions prevailing along our eastern frontier must cease. I see no possibility of persuading Poland, who deems

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herself safe from attack by virtue of guarantees given to her, to agree to a peaceful solution. Unless we are determined under the circumstances to solve the question one way or the other, I would despair of an honorable future for my country. If fate decrees that our two peoples should fight one another once more over this question, it would be from different motives. I for my part, M. Daladier, would fight with my people for the reparation of an injustice, while the others would fight for its retention. This is all the more tragic in view of the fact that many great men of your nation have long since recognized the folly of the solution found in 1919 and the impossibility of keeping it up for ever. I am fully conscious of the grave consequences which such a conflict would involve. But I think that Poland would suffer most, for whatever the issue of such a war, the Polish State of today would in any case be lost.

That our two peoples should now engage in another murderous war of destruction causes me as much pain as it does you, M. Daladier. Unfortunately, as stated earlier in my letter, I see no possibility open to us of influencing Poland to take a saner attitude and thus to remedy a situation which is unbearable for both the German people and the German Reich.

Adolf Hitler

a certified true copy
signed: Dr Martin HORN
attorney at law.

Cont.c Ri-Exhibit No.206

H0789 - 0043

COPY

DOCUMENTS CONCERNING GERMAN-POLISH RELATIONS AND THE OUTBREAK OF HOSTILITIES BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND GERMANY ON 3 SEPTEMBER 1939.

"Number 74"

Number 463

Memorandum of the British Government handed to the Fuehrer by the British Ambassador on 28 August 1939, 10.30 PM.

His Majesty's Government have received the message conveyed to them from the German Chancellor by His Majesty's Ambassador in Berlin, and have considered it with the care which it demands.

They note the Chancellor's expression of his desire to make friendship the basis of the relations between Germany and the British Empire and they fully share this desire. They believe with him that if a complete and lasting understanding between the two countries could be established it would bring untold blessings to both peoples.

2. The Chancellor's message deals with two groups of questions: those which are the matters now in dispute between Germany and Poland and those affecting the ultimate relations of Germany and Great Britain. In connexion with these last, His Majesty's Government observe that the German Chancellor has indicated certain proposals which, subject to one condition, he would be prepared to make to the British Government for a general understanding. These proposals are, of course, stated in very general form and would require closer definition, but His Majesty's Government are fully prepared to take them, with some additions, as subjects for discussion and they would be ready, if the differences between Germany and Poland are peacefully composed, to proceed so soon as practicable to such discussion with a sincere desire to reach agreement.

3. The condition which the German Chancellor lays down is that there must first be a settlement of the differences between Germany and Poland. As to that, His Majesty's Government entirely agree. Everything, however, turns upon the nature of the settlement and the method by which it is to be reached. On these points, the importance of which cannot be absent from the Chancellor's mind, his message is silent, and His Majesty's Government feel compelled to point out that an understanding upon both of these is essential to achieving further progress. The German Government will be aware that His Majesty's Government have obligations to Poland by which they are bound and which they intend to honour. They could not, for any advantage offered to Great Britain, acquiesce in a settlement which put in jeopardy the independence of a State to whom they have given their guarantee.

4. In the opinion of His Majesty's Government a reasonable solution of the differences between Germany and Poland could and should be effected by agreement between the two countries on lines which would include the safeguarding of Poland's essential interests, and they recall that in his speech of the 28th April last the German Chancellor recognised the importance of these interests to Poland. But, as was stated by the Prime Minister in his letter to the German Chancellor of the 22nd August, His Majesty's Government consider it essential for the success of the discussions which would precede the agreement that it should be understood beforehand that any settlement arrived at would be guaranteed by other Powers. His Majesty's Government would be ready if desired to make their contribution to the effective operation of such a guarantee.

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In the view of His Majesty's Government it follows that the next step should be the initiation of direct discussions between the German and Polish Governments on a basis which would include the principles stated above, namely, the safeguarding of Poland's essential interests and the securing of the settlement by an international guarantee.

They have already received a definite assurance from the Polish Government that they are prepared to enter into discussions on this basis, and His Majesty's Government hope the German Government would for their part also be willing to agree to this course.

If, as His Majesty's Government hope, such discussion led to agreement the way would be open to the negotiation of that wider and more complete understanding between Great Britain and Germany which both countries desire.

5. His Majesty's Government agree with the German Chancellor that one of the principal dangers in the German-Polish situation arises from the reports concerning the treatment of minorities. The present state of tension, with its concomitant frontier incidents, reports of maltreatment and inflammatory propaganda, is a constant danger to peace. It is manifestly a matter of the utmost urgency that all incidents of the kind should be promply and rigidly suppressed and that unverified reports should not be allowed to circulate, in order that time may be afforded, without provocation on either side, for a full examination of the possibilities of settlement. His Majesty's Government are confident that both the Governments concerned are fully alive to these considerations.

6. His Majesty's Government have said enough to make their own attitude plain in the particular matters at issue between Germany and Poland. They trust that the German Chancellor will not think that, because His Majesty's Government are scrupulous concerning their obligations to Poland, they are not anxious to use all their influence to assist the achievement of a solution which may commend itself both to Germany and to Poland.

That such a settlement should be achieved seems to His Majesty's Government essential, not only for reasons directly arising in regard to the settlement itself, but also because of the wider considerations of which the German Chancellor has spoken with such conviction.

7. It is unnecessary in the present reply to stress the advantage of a peaceful settlement over a decision to settle the questions at issue by force of arms. The results of a decision to use force have been clearly set out in the Prime Minister's letter to the Chancellor of the 22nd August, and His Majesty's Government do not doubt that they are as fully recognised by the Chancellor as by themselves.

On the other hand, His Majesty's Government, noting with interest the German Chancellor's reference in the message now under consideration to a limitation of armaments, believe that, if a peaceful settlement can be obtained, the assistance of the world could confidently be anticipated for practical measures to enable the transition from preparation for war to the normal activities of peaceful trade to be safely and smoothly effected.

8. A just settlement of these questions between Germany and Poland may open the way to world peace. Failure to reach it would ruin the hopes of a better understanding between Germany and Great Britain, would bring the two countries into conflict, and might well plunge the whole world into war. Such an outcome would be a calamity without parallel in history.

A certified true copy:

Dr. Martin Horn
Attorney at Law

HO789-0044

H0789 – 0045

Rı-Exhibit No.207

C O P Y

44

from the White-Paper No.2

Documents on the Events preceding the Outbreak of War

No.463

Memorandum from the British Government, Handed to the Fuehrer by the British Ambassador, August 28, 1939, at 10:30 P.M.

His Majesty's Government have received the message conveyed to them from the German Chancellor by His Majesty's Ambassador in Berlin, and have considered it with the care which it demands.

1. They note the Chancellor's expression of his desire to make friendship the basis of the relations between Germany and the British Empire and they fully share this desire. They believe with him that if a complete and lasting understanding between the two countries could be established it would bring untold blessings to both peoples.

2. The Chancellor's message deals with two groups of questions: those which are the matters now in dispute between Germany and Poland and those affecting the ultimate relations of Germany and Great Britain. In connection with these last, His Majesty's Government observe that the German Chancellor has indicated certain proposals, which, subject to one condition, he would be prepared to make to the British Government for a general understanding. These proposals are, of course, stated in very general form and would require closer definition, but His Majesty's Government are fully prepared to take them, with some additions,

HO789-0046

as subjects for discussion and they would be ready, if the differences between Germany and Poland are peacefully composed, to proceed as soon as practicable to such discussion with a sincere desire to reach agreement.

3. The condition which the German Chancellor lays down is that there must be a settlement of the differences between Germany and Poland. As to that His Majesty's Government entirely agree. Everything, however, turns upon the nature of the settlement and the method by which it is to be reached. On these points, the importance of which cannot be absent from the Chancellor's mind, his message is silent, and His Majesty's Government feel compelled to point out that an understanding upon both of these is essential to achieving further progress. The German Government will be aware that His Majesty's Government have obligations to Poland by which they are bound and which they intend to honor. They could not, for any advantage offered to Great Britain, acquiesce in a settlement which put in jeopardy the independence of a State to whom they have given their guarantee.

4. In the opinion of His Majesty's Government a reasonable solution of the differences between Germany and Poland could and should be effected by agreement between the two countries on lines which would include the safeguarding of Poland's essential interest, and they recall that in his speech of last April 28 the German Chancellor recognized the importance of these interests to Poland.

But, as was stated by the Prime Minister in his letter to the German Chancellor of August 22, His Majesty's Government consider it essential for the success of the discussions which would precede the agreement that it should be

H0789-0047

understood beforehand that any settlement arrived at would be guaranteed by other Powers. His Majesty's Government would be ready if desired to make their contribution to the effective operation of such a guarantee.

In the view of His Majesty's Government it follows that the next step should be the initiation of direct discussions between the German and Polish Governments on a basis which would include the principles stated above, namely, the safeguarding of Poland's essential interests and the securing of the settlement by an international guarantee. They have already received a definite assurance from the Polish Government that they are prepared to enter into discussions on this basis, and His Majesty's Government hope the German Government would for their part also be willing to agree to this course.

If, as His Majesty's Government hope, such discussion led to agreement, the way would be open to the negotiation of that wider and more complete understanding between Great-Britain and Germany which both countries desire.

5. His Majesty's Government agree with the German Chancellor that one of the principaldangers in the German-Polish situation arises from the reports concerning the treatment of minorities. The present state of tension, with its concomitant frontier incidents, reports of maltreatment and inflammatory propaganda, is a constant danger to peace. It is manifestly a matter of the utmost urgency that all incidents of the kind should be promptly and rigidly suppressed and that unverified reports should not be allowed to circulate, in order that time may be afforded, without provocation on either side, for a full examination of the possibilities

Cont.a Ri-Exhibit No.207

H0789-0048

of settlement. His Majesty's Government are confident that both Governments concerned are fully alive to these considerations.

6. His Majesty's Government have said enough to make their own attitude plain in the particular matters at issue between Germany and Poland. They trust that the German Chancellor will not think that, because His Majesty's Government are scrupulous concerning their obligations to Poland, they are not anxious to use all their influence to assist the achievement of a solution which may commend itself both to Germany and to Poland.

That such a settlement should be achieved seems to His Majesty's Government essential, not only for reasons directly arising in regard to the settlement itself, but also because of the wider considerations of which the German Chancellor has spoken with such conviction.

It is unnecessary in the present reply to stress the advantage of a peaceful settlement over a decision to settle the questions at issue by force of arms. The results of a decision to use force have been clearly set out in the Prime Minister's letter to the Chancellor of the 22nd of August, and his Majesty's Government do not doubt that they are as fully recognized by the Chancellor as by themselves.

On the other hand, His Majesty's Government, noting with interest the German Chancellor's reference in the message now under consideration to a limitation of armaments, believe that, if a peaceful settlement can be obtained, the assistance of the world could confidently be anticipated for practical measures to enable the transition from preparation for war to the normal activities of peaceful trade to be

H0789-0049

safely and smoothly effected.

8. A just settlement of these questions between Germany and Poland may open the way to world peace. Failure to reach it would ruin the hopes of better understanding between Germany and Great Britain, would bring the two countries into conflict, and might well plunge the whole world into war. Such an outcome would be a calamity without parallel in history.

a certified true copy
signed: Dr Martin HORN
Attorney at law.

Cont.c Ri-Exhibit No.207

H0789 - 0050

Ri Esch. 208

Excerpts from

~~451 - 493~~
45 + 452

The British War Blue Book

(Miscellaneous number 9 (1939)

Number 73, page 161/162

1. Viscount Halifax to Sir H. Kennard (Warsaw).
(Telegraphic). Foreign Office, August 28, 1939, 2 p.m.

Our proposed reply to Herr Hitler draws a clear distinction between the method of reaching agreement on German-Polish differences and the nature of the solution to be arrived at. As to the method we wish to express our clear view that direct discussion on equal terms between the parties is the proper means.

2. Polish Government enjoy protection of Anglo-Polish Treaty.

3. His Majesty's Government have already made it plain and are repeatin in their reply to Herr Hitler to-day that any settlement of German-Polish differences must safeguard Poland's essential interests and must be secured by international guarantee.

4. We have, of course, seen reports of Herr Hitler's reply to M. Daladi but we should not consider intimation by Polish Government of their readiness to hold direct discussions as in any way implying acceptance of Herr Hitler's demands, which would, as made plain above, have to be examined in light of principles we have stated.

5. As Polish Government appear in their reply to President Roosevelt to accept idea of direct negotiations, His Majesty's Government earnestly hope that in the light of the considerations set forth in foregoing paragraphs Polish Government will authorise them to inform German Government that Poland is ready to enter at once into direct discussion with Germany.

6. Please endeavour to see M. Beck at once and telephone reply.

H0789-0051

Ri Esch. 208

452 + 453

Excerpts from

The British War Blue Book

(Miscellaneous number 9 (1939)

Number 79, pages 178/179

2. Sir.N. Henderson to Viscount Halifax (received 9 . 15 P.M.)
(Telegraphic.) Berlin, August 29, 1939.

Herr Hitler handed me German reply at 7 · 15 this evening. Translatio of full text will follow as soon as possible.

2. In reply to two British proposals, namely, for direct German-Polish negotiations and international guarantee of any settlement, German Government declares :-

(1)That, in spite of its scepticism as to the prospect of their success, it accepts direct negotiation solely out of desire to ensure lasting friendship with Britain, and

(2)In the case of any modifications of territory German Government cannot undertake or participate in any guarantees without consulting the U.S.S.R

3. Note observes that German proposals have never had for their object any diminution of Polish vital interests, and declares that German Government accepts mediation of Great Britain with a view to visit to Berlin of some Polish plenipotentiary. German Government, note adds, counts on arrival of such plenipotentiary to-morrow, Wednesday, 30 th August.

4. I remarked that this phrase sounded like an ultimatum, but after some heated remarks both Herr Hitler and Herr von Ribbentrop assured me that it was only intended to stress urgency of the moment when the two fully mobilised armies were standing face to face.

5. I said that I would transmit this suggestion immediately to His Majesty Government, and asked whether, if such Polish plenipotentiary did come, we could assume that he would be well received and that discussions would be conducted on footing of complete equality. Herr Hitler's reply was " of course ".

6. German demands are declared to be revision of Versailles Treaty; namely return of Danzig and the Corridor to Germany, security for lives of German nation minorities in the rest of Poland; note concludes with statement that the German Government will immediately elaborate proposals for an acceptable solution, and inform British Government, if possible, before arrival of Polish plenipotentiary.

H0789-0052

Ri Esch. 208

454

Excerpts from

The BritishhWar Blue Book

(Miscellaneous number 9 (1939)

Number 81, page 180

3. Viscount Halifax to Sir. N. Henderson (Berlin)
(Telegraphic.) Foreign Office, August 30, 1939, 2 A.M.

We shall give careful consideration to German Government's reply, but it is, of course, unreasonable to expect that we can produce a Polish representative in Berlin to-day, and German Government must not expect this.

It might be well for you at once to let this be known in proper quarters through appropriate channels. We hope you may receive our reply this afternoon.

H0789-0053

Ri Esch. 208

1454 (1

Excerpts from

The Britisch War Blue Book

(Miscellaneous number 9 (1939)

Number 82, pages 180/181

Sir N. Henderson to Viscount Halifax (received 1 P.M.)
(Telegraphic). Berlin, August 30, 1939

Your message was conveyed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs at 4 A.M. this morning. I Had made similar observation to Herr Hitler yesterday evening, his reply being that one could fly from Warsaw to Berlin in one and a half hours.

2. I repeated the message this morning by telephone to State Secretary, who said that it had already been conveyed to Herr Hitler. He added that somethin must be done as soon as soon as possible.

3. While I still recommend that the Polish Government should swallow this eleventh-hour effort to establish direct contact with Herr Hitler, even if it be only to convince the world that they were prepared to make their own sacrifice for preservation of peace, one can only conclude from the German reply that Herr Hitler is determined to achieve his ends by so-called peaceful fair means if he can, but by force if he cannot. Much, of course, may also depend on detailed plan referred to in the last paragraph of the German reply.

4. Nevertheless, if Herr Hitler is allowed to continue to have the initiative it seems to me that result can only be either war or once again victory for him by a display of force and encouragement thereby to pursue the same course again next year or the year after.

H0789-0054

Ri Esch. 208

455

Excerpts from

The British War Blue Book

(Miscellaneous number 9 (1939)

Number 84, pages 181/182

Sir H. Konnard to Viscount Halifax (received 10 A.M.).
(Telegraphic.) Warsaw, August 30, 1939.

I feel sure that it would be impossible to induce the Polish Government to send M. Beck or any other representative immediately to Berlin to discuss a settlement on basis proposed by Herr Hitler. They would certainly sooner fight and perish rather than submit to such humiliation, especially after examples of Czecho-Slovakia, Lithuania and Austria.

2. I would suggest that if negotiations are to be between equals it is essential that they should take place in some neutral country or even possibly Italy, and that the basis for any negotiations should be some compromise between the clearly defined limits of March proposals on the German side and status quo on the Polish side.

3. Considering that the Polish Government, standing alone and when they were largely unprepared for war, refused the March terms it would surely be impossible for them to agree to proposals which appear to go beyond the March terms now that they have Great Britain as their ally, France has confirmed her support and world public opinion is clearly in favour of direct negotiations on equal terms and is behind Poland's resistance to a dictated settlement.

4. I am, of course, expressing no views to the Polish Government, nor am I communicating to them Herr Hitler's reply till I receive instructions which I trust will be without delay.

H0789-0055

Ri Esch. 208

456

Excerpts from

The British War Blue Book

(Miscellaneous number 9 (1939)

Number 88, pages 183/184

6. Viscount Halifax to Sir N. Henderson (Berlin).
(Telegraphic.) Foreign Office, August 30, 1939, 6 · 50 P.M.

We understand that German Government are insisting that a Polish representative with full powers must come to Berlin to receive German proposals.

2. We cannot advise Polish Government to comply with this procedure, which is wholly unreasonable.

3. Could you not suggest to German Government that they adopt the normal procedure, when their proposals are ready, of inviting Polish Ambassador to call and handing proposals to him for transmission to Warsaw and inviting suggestions as to conduct of negotiations.

4. German Government have been good enough to promise they will communicate proposals also to His Majesty's Government. If latter think they can be counted on to do their best in Warsaw to facilitate negotiations.

H0789-0056

Ri Esch. 208

457

Excerpts from

The BritishWar Blue Book

(Miscellaneous number 9 (1939)

Number 89,

7. Reply of His Majesty's Government to the German Chancellor's Communication of August 29, 1939. This reply was handed be Sir N. Henderson to Herr vom Ribbentrop at Midnight on August 30, 1939.

His Majesty's Government appreciate the friendly reference in the Declaration contained in the reply of the German Government to the latter's desire for an Anglo-German understanding and to their statement of the influence which this consideration has exercised upon their policy.

2. His Majesty's Government repeat that they reciprocate the German Governments desire for improved relations, but it will be recognised that they could not sacrifice the intersts of other friends in order to obtain that improvement. They fully understand that the German Government cannot sacrifice Germany's vital interests, but the Polish Government are in the same position and His Majesty's Government believe that the vital interests of the two countries are not incompati

3. His Majesty's Government note that the German Government accept the British proposal and are prepared to enter into direct discussions with the Polish Government.

4. His Majesty's Government understand that the German Government accept in principle the condition that any settlement should be made the subject of an international guarantee. The question of who shall participate in this guarantee. Will have to be discussed further, and His Majesty's Government hope that to avoid loss of time the German Government will take immediate steps to obtain the assent of the U.S.S.R. whose participation in the guarantee His Majesty's Government have always assumed.

5. His Majesty's Government also note that the German Government accept the position of the British Government as to Poland's vital interests and independance.

6. His Majesty's Government must make an express reservation in regard to the statement of the particular demands put forward by the German Government in an earlier passage in their reply. They understand that the German Government are drawing up proposals for a solution. No doubt those proposals will be fully examined during the discussion. It can then be determined how far they are compatible with the essential conditions which His Majesty's Government have stated and which in principle the German Government have expressed their willingness to accept.

7. His Majesty's Government are at once informing the Polish Government of the German Government's reply. The method of contact and arrangements for discussions must obviously be agreed with all urgency between the German and Polish Governments, but in His Majesty's Government's view it would be impracticab to establish contact so early as to-day.

H0789-0057

8. His Majesty's Government fully recognise the need for speed in the initiation of discussion, and they share the apprehensions of the Chancellor arising from the proximity of two mobilised armies standing face to face. They would accordingly most strongly urge that both parties should undertake that, during the negotiations, no aggressive military movements will take place. His Majesty's Government feel confident that they could obtain such an undertaking from the Polish Government if the German Government would give similar assurances.

9. Further, His Majesty's Government would suggest that a temporary modus vivendi might be arranged for Danzig, which might prevent the occurrence of incidents tending to render German-Polish relations more difficult.

H0789-0058

Ri Esch. 208

459 + 460

461

Excerpts from

The British War Blue Book

(Miscellaneous number 9 (1939)

Number 90.

Viscount Halifax to Sir H. Kennard (Warsaw).
(Sent to Sir H. Kennard on August 30 and acted on in the early morning of August 3
(Telegraphic.) Foreign Office, August 30, 1939.

My telegram to Berlin gives the text of the reply of His Majesty's Government* to the German communication which* has been repeated to you.

2. Please communicate it to M. Beck. In doing so, you should point out that, whilst the first part of the German Government's reply consists of an indefensible and misleading presentation of the German case, the really important part of the reply consists of Germany's acceptance of the proposal for direct discussion, of the suggestion of the proposed international guarantee, and Germany's assertion that she intends to respect Poland's vital interests.

3. It is perhaps unnecessary to take exception at this stage to much that finds place in the German reply, of which His Majesty's Government would be as critical as, they have no doubt, would be the Polish Government, but His Majesty's Government have made an express reservation in regard to statement of the particular demands put forward in the German note. The point that seemed to call for immediate comment was the German demand that a Polish representative should present himself at Berlin to-day. M. Beck will see the line we took last night on this (see my telegram to Berlin‡) and the further reference we have made to point in our reply to German Government's latest communication. German Government are now drawing up proposals for a solution, and it will be in the light of these, and of other developments, that the decision as to future procedure, including place and conditions of discussion, will have to be taken.

4. M. Beck will see from the reply of His Majesty's Government that the proposal has been made for a military standstill during discussions, to which His Majesty's Government earnestly hope that the Polish Government will have no objection.

5. His Majesty's Government would be glad to have the views of the Polish Government urgently. In view of the fact that the Polish Government have authorised His Majesty's Government to say that they are prepared to enter into direct discussions with the German Government, His Majesty's Government hope that provided method and general arrangement for discussions can be satisfactorily agreed. Polish Government will be prepared to do so without delay. We regard it as most important from the point of view of the internal situation in Germany and of world opinion that, so long as the German Government profess themselves ready to negotiate, no opportunity should be given them for placing the blame for a conflict on Poland.

6. You should, of course, emphasise that His Majesty's Government have made it quite clear to Herr Hitler that they are irrevocably determined to implement their obligations without reserve. On this point there is no misunderstanding in Berlin. The position of the Polish Government is very different from that which they occupied last March, since it is now supported both by direct British guarantee and promise of British participation in guarantee of any settlement reached on bases we have indicated, and the conversations would be carried on against this background.

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* 89. † No. 78 ‡ No. 81.

462 + 463

No. 92

9. Sir Henderson to Viscount Halifax (received 9.30 A.M. August 31)
(Telegraphic.) Berlin, August 30, 1939

I told Herr von RIBBENTROP this evening that His Majesty's Government found it difficult to advise Polish Government to accept procedure adumbrated in German reply, and suggested that he should adopt normal contact, i.e. ,that when German proposals were ready to invite Polish Ambassador to call and to hand him proposals for transmission to his Government with a view to immediate opening of negotiations. I added that if basis afforded prospect of settlement His Majesty's Government could be counted upon to do their best in Warsaw to temporize negotiations.

2. Herr von Ribbentrop's reply was to produce a lengthy document which he read out in German about at top speed. Imagining that he would eventually hand it to me I did not attempt to follow too closely the sixteen or more articles which it contained. Though I cannot therefore guarantee accuracy the main points were: restoration of Danzig to Germany; southern boundary of Corridor to be line Marienwerder, Graudenz, Bromberg, Schoenlanke; plebiscite to be held in the Corridor on basis of population on 1st January, 1919, absolute majority to decide; international commission of British, French, Italian and Russian members to police the Corridor and guarantee reciprocal communication with Danzig and Gdynia pending result of the plebiscite ; Gdynia to be reserved to Poland; Danzig to be purely commercial city and demilitarized.

3. When I asked Herr von Ribbentrop for text of these proposals in accordance with undertaking in the German reply of yesterday, he asserted that it was now too late as Polish representative had not arrive in Berlin by midnight.

4. I observed that to treat matter in this way meant that request for Polish representative to arrive in Berlin on 30th August constituted, in fact, an ultimatum in spite of what he and Herr Hitler had assured me yesterday. This he denied, saying that idea of an ultimatum was figment of my imagination. Why then I asked could he not adopt normal procedure and give me copy of proposals and ask Polish Ambassador to call on him, just as Herr Hitler had summoned me a few days ago, and

H0789-0059

464

hand them to him for communication to Polish Government? In the most violent terms Herr von Ribbentrop said that he would never ask the Ambassador to visit him. He hinted that if Polish Ambassador asked him for interview it might be different. I said that I would naturally inform my Government so at once. Whereupon he said while those were his personal views he would bring all that I had said to Herr Hitler's notice. It was for Chancellor to decide.

5. We parted on that note, but I must tell you that Herr von Ribbentrop's whole demeanour during an unpleasant interview was aping Herr Hitler at his worst. He inveighed incidentally against Polish mobilization, but I retorted that it was hardly surprising since Germany had also mobilized as Herr Hitler himself had admitted to me yesterday.

H0789-0060

H0789-0061

465

Excerpts from

The British War Blue Book

(Miscellaneous number 9 (1939)

Number 94

10. Viscount Halifax to Sir H. Kennard (Warsaw).
(Telegraphic). Foreign Office, August 31, 1939, 12 noon.

You should concert with your French colleague in suggesting to Polish Government that they should now make known to the German Government, preferably direct, but if not, through us, that they have been made aware of our last reply to German Government, and that they confirm their acceptance of the principle of direct discussions.

French Government fear that German Govenrment might take advantage of silence on part of Polish Government.

H0789-0062

Ri Esch. 208

466

Excerpts from

The British War Blue Book

(Miscellaneous number 9 1939)

11. Number 95. page 161

Viscount Halifax to Sir H. KENNARD (Warsaw).
(Telgraphic) Foreign Office, August 31, 1939, 1 - 45 P.M.
Berlin telegram of 30th August.*

Please at once inform Polish Government and advise them, in view of fact that they have accepted principle of direct discussions, immediate to instruct Polish Ambassador in Berlin to say to German Government that, if latter have any proposals, he is ready to transmit them to his Government so that they may at once consider them and make suggestions for early discussions.

*No. 92.

H0789-0063

467+468

Excerpts from

The BritishhWar Blue Book

(Miscellaneous number 9 (1939)

Number 96

Sir H. Konnard to Viscount Halifax (received 7 · 15 P.M.)
(Telegraphic.) Warsaw, August 31, 1939.
My telegram of 31st August.*

M. Beck has just handed me in writing Polish reply to my démarche last night; translation is in my immediately following telegram.* He particularly asked that it should be treated as most confidential. *

2. I asked M. Beck what steps he proposed to take in order to establish contact with the German Government. He said he would now instruct M. Lipski to seek an interview either with the Minister for Foreign Affairs or State Secretary in order to say Poland had accepted British proposals. I urged him to do this without delay.

3. I then asked him what attitude Polish Ambassador would adopt if Herr von Ribbentrop or whoever he saw handed him the German proposals. He said that M.Lipski would not be authorised to accept such a document as, in view of past experience, it might be accompanied by some sort of ultimatum. In his view it was essential that contact should be made in the first instance, and that then details should be discussed as to where, with whom, and on what basis negotiations should be commenced.

4. As regards Danzig he pointed out that the situation there was becoming extremely serious. Polish officials were being arrested, railway traffic was suspended, and he thought it essential that immediate steps should be taken to secure a modus vivendi as a result of which those arrested would be released and railway traffic would be resumed. He suggested M. Burckhardt might be able to effect this.

5. He confirmed that no other serious incidents had occurred, but stated that he feared that in connexion with any negotiations he would have to appeal to the intervention of His Majesty's Government.

6. He added that if invited to go to Berlin he would of course not go, as he had no intention of being treated like President Hacha.

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* No. 93. * i.e., the night of August 30/31. * No. 79.

H0789-0064

469+470

Excerpts from

The British War Blue Book

(Miscellaneous number 9 (1939)

Number 97

Sir H. Kennard to Viscount Halifax (received 6 · 30 P.M.)
(Telegraphic). Warsaw 31, 1939.
Following is text of Poland's reply dated 31st August, 1939:-

" (1) Polish Government confirm their readiness which has previously been expressed for a direct exchange of views with the German Government on the basis proposed by British Government and communicated to me by Lord Halifax's telegram of 28th August addressed to the British Ambassador, Warsaw.*

" (2) Polish Government are also prepared on a reciprocal basis to give a formal guarantee that in the event of negotiations taking place Polish troops will not violate the frontiers of the German Reich provided a corresponding guarantee is given regarding non-violation of frontiers of Poland by troops of the German Reich.

" (3) In the present situation it is also essential to create a simple provisional modus vivendi in the Free City of Danzig.

" (4) As regards the suggestions communicated to Polish Government on 28th August through the intermediary of the British Ambassador at Warsaw, an explanation of what the British Government understands by international guarantee would be required in regard to relations between Poland and the German Reich. In default of an answer to this fundamental question the Polish Government are obliged completely to reserve their attitude towards this matter until such time as full explanations are received.

" (5) Polish Government express hope that in the event of conversations with the German Reich being initiated, they will continue to be able to take advantage of good offices of His Majesty's Government."

H0789-0065

Ri Esch.208

471 + 472

Excerpts from

The British War Blue Book

(Miscellaneous number 9 (1939)

Number 98

Message which was communicated to H.M. Ambassador in Berlin by the State Secretary on August 31, 1939, at 9 · 15 P.M.

His Majesty's Government informed the German Government, in a note dated the 28th August, 1939,* of their readiness to offer their mediation towards direct negotiations between Germany and Poland over the problems in dispute. In so doing they made it abundantly clear that they, too, were aware of the urgent need for progress in view of the continuous incidents and the general European tension. In a reply dated the 29th August, the German Government, in spite of being sceptical as to the desire of the Polish Government to come to an understanding, declared themselves ready in the interests of peace to accept the British mediation or suggestion. After considering all the circumstances prevailing at the time, they considered it necessary in their note to point out that, if the danger of a catastrophe was to be avoided, then action must be taken readily and without delay. In this sense they declared themselves ready to receive a personage appointed by the Polish Government up to the evening of the 30th August, with the proviso that the latter was, in fact, empowered not only to discuss but to conduct an conclude negotiations.

Further, the German Government pointed out that they felt able to make the basic points regarding the offer of an understanding available to the British Government by the time the Polish negotiator arrived in Berlin.

Instead of a statement regarding the arrival of an authorised Polish personage, the first answer the Government of the Reich received to their readiness for an understanding was the news of the Polish mobilisation, and only towards 12 o'clock on the night of the 30th August, 1939 did they receive a somewhat general assurance of British readiness to help towards the commencement of negotiations.

Although the fact that the Polish negotiator expected by the Government of the Reich did not arrive removed the necessary condition for informing His Majesty's Government of the views of the German Government as regards possible bases of negotiation, since His Majesty's Government themselves had pleaded for direct negotiations between Germany and Poland, the German Minister for Foreign Affairs, Herr von Ribbentrop, gave the British Ambassador on the occasion of the presentation of the last British note precise information as to the text of the German proposals which would be regarded as a basis of negotiation in the event of the arrival of the Polish plenipotentiary.

The Government of the German Reich considered themselves entitled to claim that in these circumstances a Polish personage would immediately be nominated, at any rate retroactively.

* No. 74. † No. 78.

For the Reich Government cannot be expected for their part continually not only to emphasise their willingness to start negotiations, but actually to be ready to do so, while being from the Polish side merely put off with empty subterfuges and meaningless declarations.

It has once more been made clear as a result of a démarche which has meanwhile been made by the Polish Ambassador that the latter himself has no plenary powers either to enter into any discussion, or even to negotiate.

The Fuehrer and the German Government have thus waited two days in vain for the arrival of a Polish negotiater with plenary powers.

In these circumstances the German Government regard their Proposals as having this time too been to all intents and purposes rejected, although they considered that these proposals, in the form in which they were made known to the Britsh Government also, were more than loyal, fair and practicable.

The Reich Government consider it timely to inform the public of the bases for negotation which were communicated to the British Ambassador by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Herr von Ribbentrop.

The situation existing between the German Reich and Poland is at the moment of such a kind that any further incident can lead to an explosion on the part of the military forces which have taken up their position on both sides. Any peaceful solution must be framed in such a way as to ensure that the events which lie at the root of this situation cannot be repeated on the next occasion offered, and that thus not only the East of Europe, but also other territories shall not be brought into such a state of tension. The causes of this development lie in: (1) the impossible delineation of frontiers, as fixed by the Versailles dictate; (2) the impossible treatment of the minority in the ceded territories.

In making these proposals, the Reich Government are, therefore, actuated by the idea of finding a lasting solution which will remove the impossible situation created by frontier delineation, which may assure to both parties their vitally important line of communication, which may-as far as it is at all possible-remove the minority problem and, in so far as this is not possible, may give the minorities the assurance of a tolerable future by means of a reliable guarantee of their rights.

The Reich Government are content that in so doing it is essential that economic and physical damage done since 1918 should be exposed and repaired in its entirety. They, of course, regard this obligation as being binding for both parties.

These considerations lead to the following practical proposals:-

(1) The Free City of Danzig shall return to the German Reich in view of its purely German character, as well as of the unanimous will of its population;

(2) The territory of the so-called Corridor which extends from the Baltic Sea to the line Marienwerder-Graudenz-Kulm-Bromberg (inclusive) and thence may run in a westerly direction to Schoenlanke, shall itself decide as to whether it shall belong to Germany or Poland;

(3) For this purpose a plebiscite shall take place in this territory. The following shall be entitled to vote: all Germans who were either domiciled in this territory on the 1st January, 1918, or who by that date have been born there, and similarly of Poles, Kashubes, &c., domiciled in this territory on the above day (the 1st January, 1918) or born there up to that date. The Germans who have been driven from this territory shall return to it in order to exercise their vote with a view to ensuring an objective plebiscite, and also with a view to ensuring the extensive preparation necessary therefor. The above territory shall, as in the case of the Saar territory, be placed under the supervision.

H0789-0066

H0789-0067

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of an international commission to be formed immediately, on which shall be represented the four Great Powers-Italy, the Soviet Union, France and England. This commission shall exercise all the rights of sovereignty in this territory. With this end in view, the territory shall be evacuated within a period of the utmost brevity, still to be agreed upon, by the Polish armed forces, the Polish police, and the Polish authorities;

(4)The Polish port of Gdynia, which fundamentally constitutes Polish sovereign territory so far as it is confined territorially to the Polish settlement, shall be excluded from the above territory. The exact frontiers of this Polish port should be determined between Germany and Poland, and, if necessary, delimited by an international committee of arbitration;

(5) With a view to assuring the necessary time for the execution of the extensive work involved in the carrying out of a just plebiscite, this plebiscite shall not take place before the expiry of twelve months;

(6)In order to guarantee unrestricted communication between Germany and East Prussia and between Poland and the sea during this period, roads and railways shall be established to render free transit traffic possible. In this connexion only such taxes as are necessary for the means of communication and for the provision of transport may be levied;

(7) The question as to the party to which the area belongs is to be decided by simple majority of the votes recorded;

(8) In order to guarantee to Germany free communication with her province of Danzig-East, Prussia, and to Poland her connexion with the sea after the execution of the plebiscite-regardless of the results thereof-Germany shall, in the event of the plebiscite area going to Poland, receive an extra-territorial traffic zone, approximately in a line from Buetow to Danzig or Dirschau, in which to lay down an autobahn and a 4-track railway line. The road and the railway shall be so constructed that the Polish lines of communication are not affected, i.e., they shall pass either over or under the latter. The breadth of this zone shall be fixed at 1 kilometre, and it is to be German sovereign territory. Should the plebiscite be favourable to Germany, Poland is to obtain rights, analogous to those accorded to Germany, to a similar extra-territorial communication by road and railway for the purpose of free and unrestricted communicationswith her port of Gdynia;

(9) In the event of the Corridor returning to the German Reich, the latter declares its right to proceed to an exchange of population with Poland to the extent to which the nature of the Corridor lends itself thereto;

(10) Any special right desired by Poland in the port of Danzig would be negotiated on a basis of territory against similar rights to be granted to Germany in the port of Gydnia;

(11) In order to remove any feeling in this area that either side was being threatened, Danzig and Gdtnia would have the character of exclusively mercantile towns, that is to say, without military installations and military fortifications;

(12) The peninsula of Hela, which as a result of the plebiscite might go either to Poland or to Germany, would in either case have similarly to be demilitarised;

(13) Since the Government of the German Reich has the most vehement complaints to make against the Polish treatment of minorities, and since the

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Polish Government for their part feel obliged to make complaints against Germany, both parties declare their agreement to have these complaints laid before an international committee of enquiry, whose task would be to examine all complaints as regards economic or physical damage, and any other acts of terrorism. Germany and Poland undertake to make good economic or other damage done to minorities on either side since the year 1918, or to cancel expropriati as the case may be, or to provide complete compensation to the persons affected for this and any other encroachments on their economic life;

(14) In order to free the Germans who may be left in Poland and the Poles who may be left in Germany from the feeling of being outlawed by all nations, and in order to render them secure against being called upon to perform action or to render services incompatible with their national sentiments, Germany and Poland agree to guarantee the rights of both minorities by means of the most comprehensive and binding agreement, in order to guarantee to these minorities the preservation, the free development and practical application of their nationality (Volkstum), and in particular to permit for this purpose such organisation as they may consider necessary. Both parties undertake not to call upon members of the minority for military service;

(15) In the event of agreement on the basis of these proposals, Germany and Poland declare themselves ready to decree and to carry out the immediate demobilisation of their armed forces;

(16) The further measures necessary for the more rapid execution of the above arrangement shall be agreed upon by both Germany and Poland conjointly.

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Ri Esch. 208

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Excerpts from

The British War Blue Book

(Miscellaneous number 9 (1939)

Number 100

Viscount Halifax to Sir H. Kennard (Warsaw).
(Telegraphic.) Foreign Office, September 1, 1939, 12 · 50 A.M.
Your telegrams of 31st August*:-

1. I am glad to learn that Polish Ambassador at Berlin is being instruct to establishcontact with German Government.

2. I fully agree as to the necessity for discussing detailed arrangement for the negotiations and as to the undesirability of a visit by M. Beck to Berlin.

3. On the other hand, I do not see why the Polish Government should feel difficulty about authorising Polish Ambassador to accept a document from the German Government, and I earnestly hope that they may be able to modify their instructions to him in this respect. There was no mention of any ultimatu in the report on the German proposals which has been furnished to us, and the suggestion that the demand for the presence of a Polish plenipotentiary at Berlin on 30th August amounted to an ultimatum was vigorously repudiated by Her von Rippentrop in conversation with His Majesty's Ambassador. If the document did contain an ultimatum, the Polish Government would naturally refuse to discuss it until the ultimatum was withdrawn. On the other hand, a refusal by them to receive propos ls would be gr vely misunderstood by outside opinion.

4. I should have thought that the Polish Ambassador could surely be instructed to receive and transmit a document and to say (a) if it contained anything like an ultimatum, that he anticipated that the Polish Government would certainly be unable to discuss on such a basis, and (b) that, in any case, in the view of the Polish Government, questions as to the venue of the negotiations, the basis on which they should be held, and the persons to take part in them, must be discussed and decided between the two Governments.

5. If negotiations are initiated, His Majesty's Government will at all times be ready, if desired, to lend any assistance in their power to achieve a just settlement.

6. As regards an international guarantee, this will no doubt have to be fully discussed. What His Majesty's Government had in mind of the fullest and proper observance of any settlement reached.

7. As regards Danzig, we fully share the view of M. Beck as to the importance of establishing some modus vivendi. We have already made a suggestion in this sense to the German Government and will in the light of paragraph 4 of your telegram of 31st August do so again. If German Government agree, I will at once approach M. Burckhardt.

8. Please speak to M. Beck immediately in the above sense.

* Nos. 96 and 97. ÷ No. 96.

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Excerpts from

The British War Blue Book

(Miscellaneous number 9 (1939)

Number 101

Sir H. Kennard to Viscount Halifax (dated 7 : 43 P.M. September 1 and received 2 A.M. September 2).

(Telegraphic). Warsaw, September 1, 1939.

Your telegram of 1st September* was decyphered at 4 A.M. to-day.

2. M. Lipski had already called on the German Foreign Minister at 6 · 30 P.M. yesterday. In view of this fact, which was followed by German invasion of Poland at dawn to-day, it was clearly useless for me to take the action suggested.

* No. 100.

H0789-0071

Ri Esch. 208

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Excerpts from

The British War Blue Book

(Miscellaneous number 9 (1939)

Number 102

Sir N. Henderson to Viscount Halifax (received 12 ' 10 A.M. September 1).
(Telegraphic.) Berlin, August 31, 1939.

Following is translation from text of communication handed by Polish Ambassador to German Minister for Foreign Affairs this evening:-

" During the course of the night the Polish Government received from the British Government news of the exchange of information with the German Government regarding the possibility of direct discussion between the Government of the Reich and the Polish Government.

" The Polish Government are weighing favourably the British Government's suggestion; a formal answer in this matter will be communicated to them in the immediate future."

I understand that no discussion took place.

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Ri Esch. 208

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Excerpts from

The British War Blue Book

(Miscellaneous number 9 (1939)

Number 105

Speech by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons on September 1, 1939

The Prime Minister (Mr.Chamberlain): I do not propose to say many words to-night. The time has come when action rather than speech is required. Eighteen months ago in this House I prayed that the responsibility might not fall upon me to ask this country to accept the awful arbitrament of war. I fear that I may not be able to avoid that responsibility. But, at any rate, I cannot wish for conditions in which such a burden should fall upon me in which I should feel clearer than I today as to where my duty lies. No man ca say that the Government could have done more to try to keep open the way for a honourable and equitable settlement of the dispute between Germany and Poland. Nor have we neglected any means of making it crystal clear to the German Government that if they insisted on using force again in the manner in which they had used it in the past we were resolved to oppose them by force. Now that all the relevant documents are being made public we shall stand at the bar of history knowing that the responsibility for this terrible catastrophe lies on the shoulders of one man-the German Chancellor, who has not hesitated to plunge the world into misery in order to serve his own senseless ambitions.

I would like to thank the House for the forbearance, which they have shown on two recent occasions in not demanding from me information which they recognised I could not give while these negotiations were still in progress. I have now had all the correspondence with the German Government put into the form of a White Paper. On account of mechanical difficulties I am afraid there are still but a few copies available, but I understand that they will be coming in in relays while the House is sitting. I do not think it is necessary for me to refer in detail now to these documents, which are already past history. They make it perfectly clear that our object has been to try and bring about discussion of the Polish-German dispute between the tw countries themselves on terms of equality, the settlement to be one which safeguarded the independence of Poland and of which the due observance would be secured by international guarantees. There is just one passage from a recent communication, which was dated the 30th August, which I should like to quote, because it shows how easily the final clash might have been avoided had there been the least desire on the part of the German Government to arriv at a peaceful settlement. In this document we said:-

" His Majesty's Government fully recognise the need for speed in the initiation of discussions and they share the apprehensions of the Chancellor arising from the proximity of two mobilised armies standing face to face. They would accordingly most strongly urge that both parties should undertake that during the negotiations no aggressive military movements should take place.

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His Majesty's Government feel confident that they could obtain such an undertaking from the Polish Government if the German Government would give similar assurances."

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That telegram, which was repeated to Poland, brought an instantaneous reply from the Polish Government, dated the 31st August in which they said:-

" The Polish Government are also prepared on a reciprocal basis to give a formal guarantee in the event of negotiations taking place that Polish troops will not violate the frontiers of the German Reich provided a corresponding guarantee is given regarding the non-violation of the frontiers of Poland by troops of the German Reich."

We never had any reply from the German Government to that suggestion, one which if it had been followed, might have saved the catastrophe which took place this morning. In the German broadcast last night, which recited the 16 points of the proposals which they have put forward, there occurred this sentence:-

" In these circumstances the Reich Government considers its proposals rejected."

I must examine that statement. I must tell the House what are the circumstance To begin with let me say that the text of these proposals has never been communicated by Germany to Poland at all. The history of the matter is this. On Tuesday, the 29th August, in replying to a Note which we had sent to them, the German Government said, among other things, that they would immediately draw up proposals for a solution acceptable to themselves and

" will, if possible, place these at the disposal of the British Government before the arrival of the Polish negotiator."

It will be seen by examination of the White Paper that the German Government had stated that they counted upon the arrival of a plenipotentiary from Poland in Berlin on the 30th, that is to say, on the following day. In the meantime, of course, we were awaiting these proposals. The next evening, when our Ambassador saw Herr von Ribbentrop, the German Foreign Secretary, he urged upon the latter that when these proposals were ready--for we had heard no more about them--he should invite the Polish Ambassador to call and should hand him the proposals for transmission to his Government. Thereupon, reports our Ambassador in the most violent terms Herr von Ribbentrop said he would never ask the Ambassador to visit him. He hinted that if the Polish Ambassador asked him for an interview it might be different.

The House will see that this was on Wednesday night, which, according to the German statement of last night, is now claimed to be the final date after which no negotiation with Poland was acceptable. It is plain, therefore, that Germany claims to treat Poland as in the wrong because she had not by Wednesday night entered upon discussion with Germany about a set of proposals of which she had never heard.

Now what of ourselves? On that Wednesday night, at the interview to which I have just referred, Herr von Ribbentrop produced a lengthy document which he read out in German, aloud, at top speed. Naturally, after this reading our Ambassador asked for a copy of the document, but the reply was that it was now too late, as the Polish representative had not arrived in Berlin by midnight. And so, Sir, we never got a copy of those proposals, and the first time we heard them--we heard them--was on the broadcast last night. Well Sir, those are the circumstances in which the German Government said that they would consider that their proposals were rejected. Is it not clear that their conception of a negotiation was that on almost instantaneous demand a Polish plenipotentiary should go to Berlin--where others had been before him--and should there receive a statement of demands to be accepted in their entirety or refused? I am not pronouncing any opinion upon the terms themselves, for I do not feel called upon to do so. The proper course, in our view--in the view of all of us--was that these proposals should have been put before the Poles, who should have been given time to consider them and to say whether, in their opinion they did or did not infringe those vital interests of Poland which Germany had assured us on a previous occasion she intended to respect.

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Only last night the Polish Ambassador did see the German Foreign Secretary, Herr von Ribbentrop. Once again he expressed to him what, indeed, the Polish Government had already said publicly, that they were willing to negotiate with Germany about their disputes on an equal basis. What was the reply of the German Government? The reply was that without another word the German troops crossed the Polish frontier this morning at dawn and are since reported to be bombing open towns. (An Hon. Member: "Gas?") In these circumstances there is only one course open to us. His Majesty's Ambassador in Berlin and the French Ambassador have been instructed to hand to the German Government the following document:-

" Early this morning the German Chancellor issued a proclamation to the German Army which indicated clearly that he was about to attack Poland. Information which has reached His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the French Government indicates that German troops have crossed the Polish frontier and that attacks upon Polish towns are proceeding. In these circumstances it appears to the Government of the United Kingdom and France that by their action the German Government have created conditions, namely, an aggressive act of force against Poland threatening the independence of Polandm which call for the implementation by the Governments of the United Kingdom and France of the undertaking to Poland to come to her assistance. I am accordingly to inform your Excellency that unless the German Government are prepared to give His Majesty's Government satisfactory assurances that the German Government

have suspended all aggressive action against Poland and are prepared promptly to withdraw their froces from Polish territory, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom will without hesitation fulfil their obligations to Poland."

(An Hon. Member: "Time limit?".) If a reply to this last warning is unfavourable, and I do not suggest that it is likely to be otherwise, His Majesty's Ambassador is instructed to ask for his passports. In that case we are ready. Yesterday, we took further steps towards the completion of our defensive preparations. This morning we ordered complete mobilisation of the whole of the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force. We have also taken a number of other measures, both at home and abroad, which the House will not perhaps expect me to specify in detail. Briefly, they represent the final steps in accordance with pre-arranged plans. These last can be put into force rapidly, and are of such a nature that they can be informed until war seems inevitable. Steps have also been taken under the powers conferred by the House last week to safeguard the position in regard to stocks of commodities of various kinds.

The thoughts of many of us must at this moment inevitably be turning back to 1914, and to a comparison of our position now with that which existed then. How do we stand this time? The answer is that all three Services are ready, and that the situation in all directions is far more favourable and reassuring than in 1914. While behind the fighting Services we have built up a vast organisation of Civil Defence under our scheme of Air Raid Precautions. As regards the immediate man-power requirements, the Royal Navy, the Army and the Royal Air Force are in the fortunate position of having almost as many men as they can conveniently handle at this moment. There are, however, certain categories of service in which men are immediately required, both for Military and Civil Defence. These will be announced in detail through the Press and the B.B.C. The main and most satisfactory point to observe is that there is to-day no need to make an appeal in a general way for recruits such as was issued by Lord Kitchener 25 years ago. That appeal has been anticipated by many months and the men are already available.

So much for the immediate present. Now we must look to the future. It is essential in the face of the tremendous task which confronts us, more especially in view of our past experiences in this matter, to organise our man-power this time upon as methodical, equitable and economical a basis as possible.

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We, therefore, propose immediately to introduce legislation directed to that end. A Bill will be laid before you which for all practical purposes will amount to an expansion of the Military Training Act. Under its operation all fit men between the ages of 18 and 41 will be rendered liable to military service if and when called upon. It is not intended at the outset that any considerable number of men other than those already liable shall be called up, and steps will be taken to ensure that the man-power essentially required by industry shall not be taken away.

There is one other allusion which I should like to make before I end my speech, and that is to record my satisfaction, and the satisfaction of His Majesty's Government, that throughout these last days of crisis Signor Mussolini also has been doing his best to reach a solution.

It now only remains for us to set our teeth and to enter upon this struggle, which we ourselves earnestly endeavoured to avoid, with determination to see it through to the end. We shall enter it with a clear corscience, with the support of the Dominions and the British Empire, and the moral approval of the greater part of the world. We have no quarrel with the German people, except that they allow themselves to be governed by a Nazi Government. As long as that Government exists and pursues the methods it has so persistently followed during the last two years, there will be no peace in Europe. We shall merely pass from one crisis to another, and see one country after another attacked by methods which have now become familar to us in their sickening technique. We are resolved that these methods must come to an end. If out of the struggle we again re-establish in the world the rules of good faith and the renunciation of force, why, then even the sacrifices that will be entailed upon us will find their fullest justification.

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Ri-Exhibit No.209

C O P Y

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from the White-Paper No.2

Documents on the Events preceding the Outbreak of War

No.464

The Fuehrer's Reply to the British Government, Handed to the British Ambassador, August 29, 1939, at 6:45 P.M.

(Translation)

The British Ambassador in Berlin has informed the British Government of certain suggestions which I felt it incumbent upon me to put forward, in order to (1) express once more the desire of the German Government for sincere Anglo-German understanding, co-operation and friendship; (2) leave no room for doubt that such an understanding cannot be purchased at the expense of Germany's renunciation of her vital interests or even by the sacrifice of claims based just as much on general human rights as on the national dignity and honor of our nation.

It was with satisfaction that the German Government learned from the written reply of the British Government and the verbal declarations of the British Ambassador that the British Government for their part are also prepared to improve Anglo-German relations and to develop and to foster these in the spirit of the German suggestions.

The British Government are likewise convinced that the removal of the tension between Germany and Poland, which has become intolerable, is indispensable to the realization of this hope.

Since the autumn of 1938, and for the last time in March, 1939, verbal and written proposals have been submitted

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to the Polish Government, which, in consideration of the friendship then existing between Germany and Poland, might have led to a settlement of the questions under dispute which would have been acceptable to both parties. The British Government are aware that the Polish Government saw fit to reject these proposals finally in March of this year. At the same time the Polish Government made their rejection a pretext or an occasion for the adoption of military measures which have since then been continued on an ever-increasing scale. Poland had, in fact, mobilized as early as the middle of last month. In connection with the mobilization, numerous incidents took place in the Free City of Danzig at the instigation of the Polish authorities, and demands of a more or less threatening character amounting to an ultimatum were addressed to the Free City of Danzig. The closing of the frontier, which was at first in the nature of a customs measure, was afterwards carried out on military lines and was extended to affect traffic with the object of bringing about the political disintegration and the economic ruin of this German community.

Furthermore, the large group of Germans living in Poland was subjected to atrocious and barbarous ill-treatment and to other forms of persecution which resulted in some cases in the death by violence of many Germans domiciled there, or in their deportation under the most cruel circumstances. Such a situation is intolerable for a Great Power and has now forced Germany after months of inactive observation to undertake the necessary steps for the protection of her rightful interests. The German Government can only most seriously assure the British Government that a

H0789-0078

state of affairs has now been reached for which continued acquiescence or even inactive observation is no longer possible.

The demands of the German Government imply a revision of the Treaty of Versailles in this area, a fact which was recognized as necessary from the very outset; they constitute the return of Danzig and the Polish Corridor to Germany and the safeguarding of the German minorities domiciled in those territories remaining in Polish possession.

The German Government note with satisfaction that the British Government are also convinced on principle that some solution must be found for the state of affairs which has now developed. They further consider they may assume that the British Government entertain no doubt on the fact that this is a state of affairs which can no longer be remedied in a matter of days or even weeks but for which perhaps only a few hours yet remain. For in view of the disorganized state of Poland we must at any moment be prepared for the possibility of events occurring which Germany could not tolerate.

If the British Government still believe that these grave differences can be solved by direct negotiations, the German Government on their part regret at the outset that they are unable to share such an opinion. They have already tried to open up a way for peaceful negotiations of this nature, without meeting with the support of the Polish Government, and only seeing their efforts rejected by the abrupt initiation of measures of a military character in accordance with the general development indicated above.

There are two factors which the British Government

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consider important: (1) to remove most speedily the imminent danger of a conflagration by means of direct negotiations, and (2) to give the necessary economic and political safeguards by means of international guarantees for the future existence of the remaining Polish State.

To that, the German Government desire to make the following statement:

Despite their sceptical judgment of the prospects of such direct negotiations, the German Government are nevertheless prepared to accept the English proposal, and to enter into direct discussions. They do so solely because - as already emphasized - the written communications received from the British Government gives them the impression that the latter also desire a friendly agreement along the lines indicated to Ambassador Henderson. The German Government desire in this way to give to the British Government and to the British people a proof of the sincerity of the German intention of arriving at a state of permanent friendship with Great Britain.

The German Government nevertheless feel bound to point out to the British Government that in the case of a reorganization of the territorial conditions in Poland, the German Government are no longer in a position to take upon themselves any guarantees or to participate in any guarantees, without the co-operation of the U.S.S.R.

Moreover, the German Government never had the intention, in their proposals, of attacking vital Polish interests or of questioning the existence of an independent Polish State. Under these conditions, the German Government therefore agree to accept the proposed intermediation

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of the British Government to send to Berlin a Polish representative invested with plenipotentiary powers. They expect his arrival on Wednesday, August 30, 1939.

The German Government will immediately draft the proposals for a solution acceptable to them, and, if possible, will make such proposals available for the British Government also before the Polish negotiator arrives.

A certified true copy:
Dr. Martin HORN

signed: Dr. Martin HORN
Attorney at Law

Cont.c Ri-Exhibit No. 209

H0789-0081

Ri-Exhibit No.210

497

C O P Y

from the White-Paper No.2

Documents on the Events preceding the Outbreak of War

No.466

Conversation of the German Foreign Minister with the British Ambassador, at Midnight, August 30, 1939

(Translation)

Memorandum of Dr.Schmidt, Minister Plenipotentiary

Henderson delivered the Memorandum of the British Government given in the Appendix. He added that he had been instructed to discuss two additional points orally.

Complete restraint was only to be expected from the Polish Government if the German Government adopted the same attitude on their side of the frontier and if no provocation by the German minority in Poland took place. Reports were current to the effect that the Germans in Poland committed acts of sabotage which would justify the adoption of the most severe counter-measures by the Polish Government. The German Foreign Minister objected strongly to this remark. Germany, he said, was aware only of acts of provocation committed by the Poles, but Polish propaganda appeared to have done its work with the British Government. The most outrageous acts of sabotage were committed by the Poles. He refused to discuss this matter at all with the British Government.

Sir Nevile Henderson's further instructions referred to the German Government's reply of the previous day, in which the German Government had declared themselves prepared to establish direct contact with Poland if the Polish

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Government would immediately despatch a plenipotentiary. The British Government were not in a position to advise the Polish Government to accept this procedure. They suggested that the German Government should adopt the normal diplomatic way, i.e. hand their proposals to the Polish Ambassador in order to set matters going and make it possible for the Polish Ambassador to co-operate with his Government in preparing for direct German-Polish negotiations. If the German Government would also communicate these proposals to the British Government and the latter were of the opinion that the proposals constituted a reasonable basis for a settlement of the problems to be discussed, they would use their influence in Warsaw to achieve a settlement.

Referring to the last paragraph of the German reply of the previous day, Henderson asked whether the German proposals were ready, and whether these proposals could be handed over to him.

The German Foreign Minister replied, first, that British intervention had so far led to only one tangible result, namely, general mobilization on the part of Poland, and, second, that Germany had been counting on the arrival of a Polish representative that day. This had not constituted an ultimatum, as the British Ambassador had erroneously assumed, but, as the Fuehrer had already explained on the previous day, a practical proposal dictated by prevailing conditions. By midnight Germany had received no answer from Poland. The question of a possible proposal therefore no longer existed. In order to show, however, what proposals Germany had intended to make if the Polish

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representative had come, the Foreign Minister read aloud the German proposals contained in the Appendix, and explained them in detail.

Henderson replied that the statement of the Foreign Minister, that in consequence of the non-arrival of the Polish representative by midnight on Wednesday the proposals which the German Government had originally intended to make no longer held good, seemed to confirm his interpretation of the proposal as an ultimatum.

The German Foreign Minister once more emphatically opposed this conception, and referred to the statement made by the Fuehrer on the previous day, that this urgency was the outcome of the fact that two fully mobilized armies were standing face to face within firing distance of each other and that at any moment some incident might lead to serious conflict.

In conclusion, Henderson suggested that the German Foreign Minister should ask the Polish Ambassador to call on him and hand him the German proposals.

The German Foreign Minister rejected this suggested procedure as far as he personally was concerned, and concluded the conversation by saying that all decisions must rest with the Fuehrer.

Schmidt

a certified true copy
signed: Dr Martin HORN
Attorney at law.

H0789-0084

Ri-Exhibit No.211a

C O P Y

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from the White-Paper No.2

Documents on the Events preceding the Outbreak of War

No.466

Appendix 1

Memorandum from the British Government, Handed to the German Foreign Minister by the British Ambassador, at Midnight, August 30, 1939

1. His Majesty's Government appreciate the friendly reference in the Declaration contained in the reply of the German Government to the latter's desire for an Anglo-German understanding and to their statement of the influence which this consideration has exercised upon their policy.

2. His Majesty's Government repeat that they reciprocate the German Government's desire for improved relations, but it will be recognized that they could not sacrifice the interests of other friends in order to obtain that improvement. They fully understand that the German Government cannot sacrifice Germany's vital interests, but the Polish Government are in the same position and His Majesty's Government believe that the vital interests of the two countries are not incompatible.

3.His Majesty's Government note that the German Government accept the British proposal and are prepared to enter into direct discussions with the Polish Government.

4. His Majesty's Government understand that the German Government accept in principle the condition that any settlement should be made the subject of an international guarantee. The question of who shall participate in this

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guarantee will have to be discussed further, and His Majesty's Government hope that to avoid loss of time the German Government will take immediate steps to obtain the assent of the U.S.S R., whose participation in the Guarantee His Majesty's Government have always assumed.

5. His Majesty's Government also note that the German Government accept the position of the British Government as to Poland's vital interests and independence.

6. His Majesty's Government must make an express reservation in regard to the statement of the particular demands put forward by the German Government in an earlier passage in their reply. They understand that the German Government are drawing up proposals for a solution. No doubt these proposals will be fully examined during the discussions. It can then be determined how far they are compatible with the essential conditions which His Majesty's Government have stated and which in principle the German Government have expressed their willingness to accept.

7. His Majesty's Government are at once informing the Polish Government of the German Government's reply. The method of contact and arrangements for discussions must obviously be agreed upon with all urgency between the German and Polish Governments, but in His Majesty's Government's view it would be impracticable to establish contact as early as today.

8. His Majesty's Government fully recognized the need for speed in the initiation of discussion, and they share the apprehensions of the Chancellor arising from the proximity of two mobilized armies standing face to face. They would accordingly most strongly urge that both parties should undertake that, during the negogiations, no aggressive

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military movements will take place. His Majesty's Government feel confident that they could obtain such an undertaking from the Polish Government if the German Government would give similar assurances.

9. Further His Majesty's Government would suggest that a temporary "modus vivendi" might be arranged for Danzig, which might prevent the occurrence of incidents tending to render German-Polish relations more difficult.

Berlin, August 30, 1939.

a certified true copy
signed: Dr Martin HORN
Attorney at law.

Cont. a Ri-Exhibit No.211a

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Ri-Exhibit No.211b

C O P Y

from the White-Paper No.2

Documents on the Events preceding the Outbreak of War

No.466

Appendix II

Proposal for a Settlement of the Problem of Danzig and the Polish Corridor and of the German-Polish Minorities Question

(Translation)

The situation between the German Reich and Poland is at the present time such that any further incident may lead to an outbreak of hostilities between the military forces of the two countries, which have already taken up their positions on their respective sides of the frontier. Any peaceful solution of the problem must be of such a nature that the events which originally brought about this state of affairs cannot be repeated on another occasion, thus causing a state of tension not only in Eastern Europe but also elsewhere.

The causes of this development are to be found in (1) the intolerable demarcation of the frontiers as dictated in the Treaty of Versailles,(2) the intolerable treatment of the minority in the territories cut off from the Reich.

In putting forward these proposals, the German Government are attempting to find a final solution, putting an end to the intolerable situation arising from the present demarcation of frontiers, securing to both parties

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their vital lines of communication, eliminating as far as possible the problem of the minorities and, in so far as this should prove impossible, rendering the fate of the minorities bearable by effectively guaranteeing their rights.

The German Government feel convinced that it is indispensable that economic and personal damage inflicted since 1918 should be investigated, and full compensation made therefore. Of course, the German Government regard this obligation as binding upon both parties.

The above considerations give rise to the following concrete proposals:

1. By reason of its purely German character and the unanimous will of its population, the Free City of Danzig shall be returned forthwith to the German Reich.
2. The territory known as the Polish Corridor, that is to say, the territory bounded by the Baltic Sea and a line running from Marienwerder to Graudenz, Kulm, Bromberg, (including these towns), and then in a westerly direction towards Schönlanke, shall itself decide whether it shall become part of the German Reich or remain with Poland.
3. For that purpose, a plebiscite shall be held in this territory. All Germans who were domiciled in this area on January 1, 1918, or who were born there on or before that day, and also all Poles, Cassubians, etc., who were domiciled in this area on that day or who were born there on or before the above-mentioned

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date, shall be entitled to vote. Germans who have been expelled from this territory shall return for the purpose of registering their votes.

In order to ensure an impartial plebiscite and to guarantee that the necessary and extensive preparations for the plebiscite shall be carried out correctly, and International Commission like the one formed in connection with the Saar plebiscite, and consisting of members appointed by the four Great Powers, Italy, the U.S.S.R., France and Great Britain, shall be formed immediately, and placed in charge of this territory. This commission shall exercise sovereign rights throughout the territory. To that end, the territory shall be evacuated by the Polish military forces, by the Polish police and by the Polish authorities within the shortest possible time to be agreed upon.

4. The Polish port of Gdynia to the extent of the Polish settlement is not included in this area, but, as a matter of principle, is recognized as Polish territory.

   The details of the boundaries of this Polish port shall be decided on by Germany and Poland, and if necessary established by an International Court of Arbitration.

5. In order to allow for ample time for the necessary and extensive preparations for the carrying out of an impartial plebiscite, this

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plebiscite shall not take place before a period of twelve months has elapsed.

6. In order that during that period, Germany's lines of communication with East Prussia and Poland's access to the sea may be unrestrictedly ensured, certain roads and railway lines shall be determined, in order to facilitate unobstructed transit. In this connection only such taxes may be levied as are necessary for the upkeep of the lines of communication and for the carrying out of transport.

7. The allocation of this territory shall be decided on by the absolute majority of the votes cast.

8. In order to secure, after the plebiscite (irrespective of the result thereof), Germany's unrestricted communication with the province of Danzig - East Prussia, and Poland's access to the sea, Germany shall, in case the territory be returned to Poland as a result of the plebiscite, be given an extraterritorial traffic zone running from, say, Bütow to Danzig or Dirschau, for the purpose of building a German motor highway (Reichsautobahn) and also a four-track railway line. The construction of the motor road and of the railway shall be carried out in such a manner that Polish lines of communication are not affected thereby, i.e., they are to be overbridged or underbridged. This zone shall be one kilometer in width and shall be German territory.

Cont.b Ri-Exhibit 211b

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Should the result of the plebiscite be in favor of Germany, Poland shall have the same rights as Germany would have had, to build an exterritorial road and railway connection in order to secure her free and unrestricted access to her port of Gdynia.

9. In the event of the Polish Corridor being returned to the Reich, the latter declares herself prepared to arrange with Poland for an exchange of population, insofar as conditions in the Corridor lend themselves to such an exchange.

10. Any special rights claimed by Poland within the port of Danzig shall be negotiated on a parity basis in exchange for equal rights for Germany at the Port of Gdynia.

11. In order to avoid any sense of menace or danger on either side, Danzig and Gdynia shall henceforth have a purely commercial character; i.e., neither of these places shall be provided with means of military defense or fortifications.

12. The Peninsula of Hela, which according to the result of the plebiscite would be allocated either to Poland or to Germany, shall also be demilitarized in any case.

13. The German Government, having most serious complaints to make about the treatment of the minority by the Poles, and the Polish Government, considering themselves entitled to raise

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complaints against Germany, agree to investigate into all complaints about economic and personal damage, as well as other acts of terrorism.

Germany and Poland bind themselves to indemnify the minorities on either side for any economic damages and other wrongs inflicted upon them since 1918; and/or to revoke all expropriations or otherwise to completely indemnify the respective person or persons for these and other encroachments upon economic life.

14. In order to free the Germansremaining in Poland, as well as the Poles remaining in Germany, from the feeling of being deprived of the benefits of international law, and above all to afford them the certainty of their not being made to take part in actions and in furnishing services of a kind not compatible with their national convictions, Germany and Poland mutually agree to safeguard the rights of their respective minorities by most comprehensive and binding agreements for the purpose of warranting these minorities the preservation, free development and cultivation of their national customs, habits and traditions, to grant them in particular and for that purpose the form of organization considered necessary by them. Both parties undertake not to draft the members of the minority into

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military service.

15. In case of an agreement being reached on the basis of these proposals, Germany and Poland declare themselves prepared immediately to order and carry out the demobilization of their respective armed forces.

16. Any additional measures required to hasten the carrying through of the above agreement shall be mutually agreed upon between Germany and Poland.

a certified true copy
signed: Dr Martin HORN
Attorney at law.

Cont.e Ri-Exhibit No.211b

Ri-Exhibit No. 212

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Copy

from the White Paper No.2: Documents on the Events preceding the outbreak of war

No.469

Announcement by the Polish Broadcasting Station at Warsaw, August 31, 1939 at 11 p.m.

(Translation)

The publication of the official German communique today has clearly revealed the aims and intentions of German policy. It proves the undisguised aggressive intentions of Germany towards Poland. The conditions under which the Third Reich is prepared to negotiate with Poland are: Danzig must immediately return to the Reich; Pomorze, together with the cities of Bromberg and Graudenz, are to be subjected to a plebiscite, for which all Germans who left that territory for any reason whatsoever since the year 1918 may return; the Polish military forces and the police force shall be evacuated from Pomorze; the police force of England, France, Italy and the U.S.S.R. will be placed in charge of the territory; the plebiscite is to take place after twelve months have elapsed; the territory of the Hela Peninsula will also be included in the plebiscite; Gdynia as a Polish town is excluded; irrespective of the result of the plebiscite an exterritorial road one kilometre wide is to be constructed. . . . .

The German News Agency announces that the time allowed for the acceptance of these conditions expired yesterday. Germany has waited in vain for a Polish delegate. The answer given was the military orders issued by the Polish Government.

Words can now no longer veil the aggressive plans of the new Huns. Germany is aiming at the domination of Europe and is cancelling the rights of nations with as yet unprecedented cynicism. This impudent proposal shows clearly how necessary were the military orders given by the Polish Government.

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Certified True Copy.

M. Horn.

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Exhibit Ri. Number 213

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Copy from the White Paper of the Foreign Office, 1939, Number 2

Documents concerning events preceding the outbreak of the war

Number 468

Official German Communique, August 31, 1939 at 9 p.m. (Translation)

In a note dated August 28, 1939, addressed to the German Government, the British Government declared themselves prepared to offer their services as intermediaries in arranging direct negotiations between Germany and Poland for the settlement of the problems under dispute. In this note they left no room for doubt that in view of the continued incidents and the general state of tension throughout Europe they also were aware of the urgency of such action.

In spite of their scepticism regarding the willingness of the Polish Government to reach any agreement, the German Government, in a reply dated August 29, 1939, declared themselves prepared in the interests of peace to accept British intermediation or suggestions. Taking into account all the circumstances prevailing at the moment they considered it necessary to point out in their reply that, if the danger of catastrophe is to be avoided at all, quick and immediate action is indispensable. The German Government have therefore declared themselves willing to receive a delegate appointed by the Polish Government by the evening of August 30, 1939, provided that this delegate should be invested with full power not only to take part in discussions but to negotiate and to make a final decision.

The German Government have further expressed the hope that they would be able to submit to the British Government the gist of the proposed agreement before the arrival of the Polish Delegate in Berlin.

Instead of a declaration regarding the arrival of an authorized Polish representative the German Government, in reply to their readiness to negotiate, received firstly the news of the Polish mobilization, and it was only towards midnight on August 30, 1939, that they received the assurance by Britain, couched in more general terms, that she would use her influence to arrange for the opening of negotiations.

Owing to the non-arrival of the Polish delegate who was expected by the German Government, there no longer existed the primary condition for informing the British Government, who had themselves recommended direct negotiations between Germany and Poland, of the position taken by the Reich as to the basis for such negotiations. Nevertheless, Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop acquainted the British Ambassador, when the latter handed over the last British note, with the exact wording of the German proposals as prepared for the expected arrival of the Polish poenipotentiary.

Under these circumstances the German Government considered that they

had every right to expect that, at least subsequently to this, the nomination of a Polish delegate would immediately take place. It was clearly too much to expect of the German Government that they should continue not only to reiterate their willingness to enter upon such negotiations, but even to sit and wait and allow themselves to be put off by the Polish side with feeble subterfuges and empty declarations.

In the meantime a demarche by the Polish Ambassador has again shown that not even he is authorized to enter upon any discussion whatsoever, much less to negotiate.

Thus the Fuehrer and the German Government have now waited for two days in vain for the arrival of an authorized Polish delegate.

Under these circumstances the German Government cannot but regard their proposals as having been once more virtually rejected, although they are of the opinion that in the form in which they were also communicated to the British Government, they were formulated in a spirit of more than goodwill and fairness, and could have been accepted.

The Government of the Reich consider it appropriate to inform the public of the proposed basis for negotiation as communicated to the British Ambassador by Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop.

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Certified True Copy.

M. Horn.

March 22, 1946

We, CATHERINE BEDFORD, Brit. Civ., 110561; and JOHN B. ROBINSON, Civ., X-046350, hereby certify that we are thoroughly conversant with the English and German languages; and that the above is a true and correct translation of the original document.

CATHERINE BEDFORD.
Brit.Civ.,110561

JOHN B. ROBINSON
Civ., X-046350

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Ri-Exhibit Nr.214

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Copy

from the book by S V E N H E D I N

"America in the Fight of the Continents"

Page 64 to 65

It was stated in London that the German suggestion was dispatched so late that the Warschau Government could not even answer it. The German invasion of Poland followed so quickly that the entire suggestion probably was not meant seriously.

This statement is untrue. The London "Daily Telegraph", a newspaper with very close relations to the Foreign Office published a report in an the evening edition of August 31, 1939 about the conferences within the British Cabinet. In these meetings it was revealed that the British Ambassador at Berlin, Sir Neville Henderson had received the German suggestion about a peaceful solution of the German-Polish conflict from the German Reichsminister of Foreign Affairs. He at once had them submitted to London, as the British Government had declared its willingness, in a note of August 28, 1939 towards the German Government, to act as mediator. The London Cabinet had submitted the German memorandum to Warsaw, and the Polish Government after receiving it, had ordered general mobilisation.

In London the report of the "Daily Telegraph" had caused great alarm, for those one was determinded to put the blame for the outbreck of war on Germany, according to the model of 1914 and this with the agreement of Roosevelt. This decision has been carried out in the British Bluebook about the start of the war and in the memoires of Sir Neville Henderson. "The Failure of a Mission". An attempt was made to conceal

the unintentional love for the truth of the "Daily Telegraph" by confiscation of the entire evening-edition and by persuading the editorial Staff, to publish a second late edition, in which the report about the meeting of the Cabinet, did not contain the sentence about the Polish general mobilization after the receipt of the German suggestion, which sentence was so painful to the British Government. But the Foreign Office could not prevent the first editions of the "Daily Telegraph" containing the report, from coming into the hands of a few people, who were interested in the true circumstances.

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copy certified by:

signed: Dr. Martin H o r n

Attorney at Law.

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